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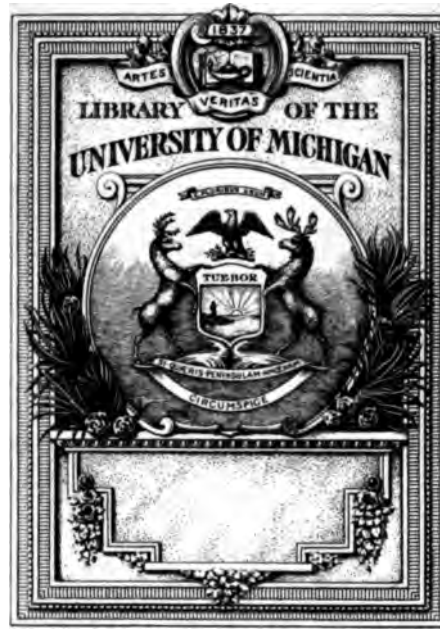
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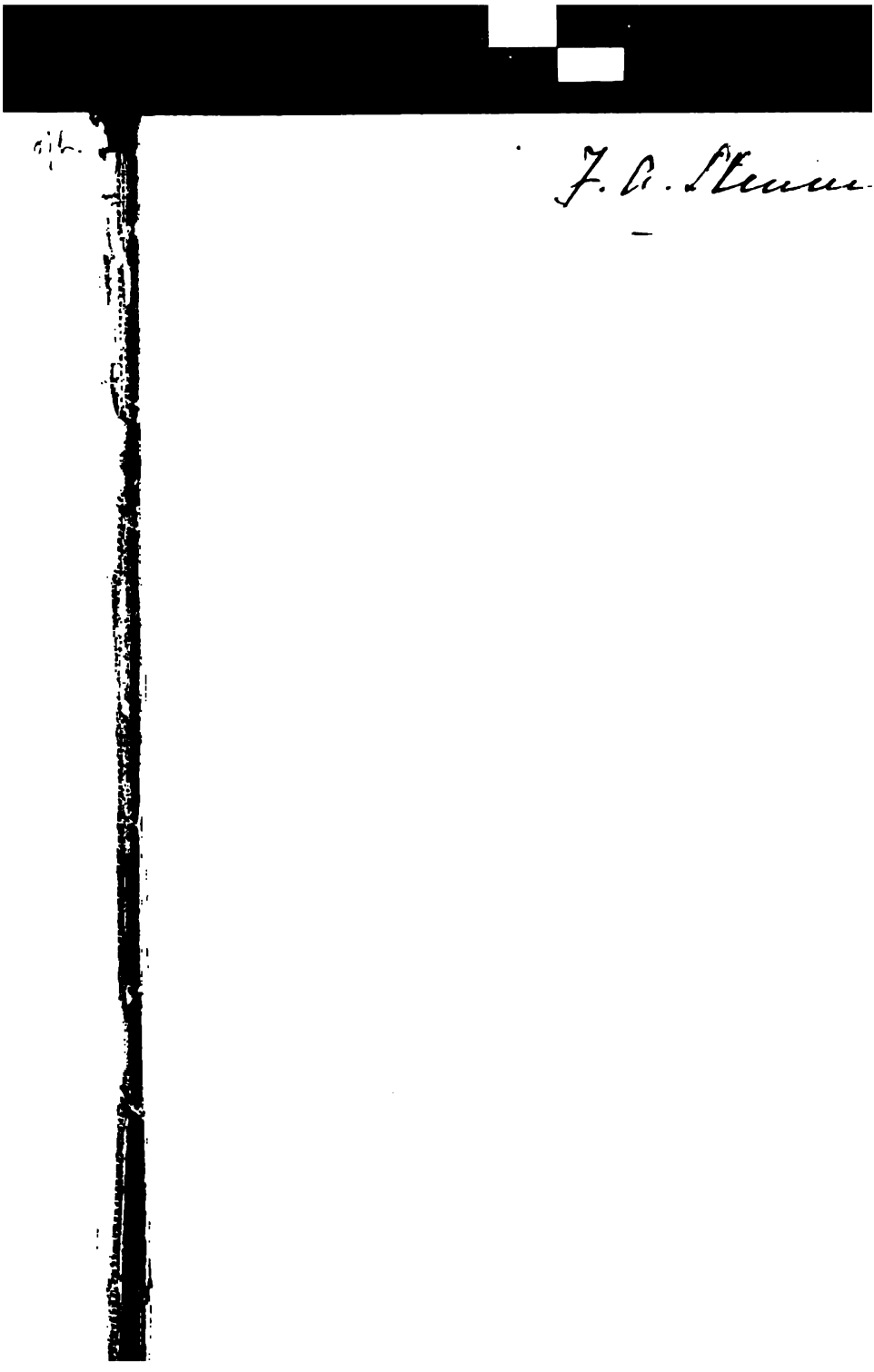

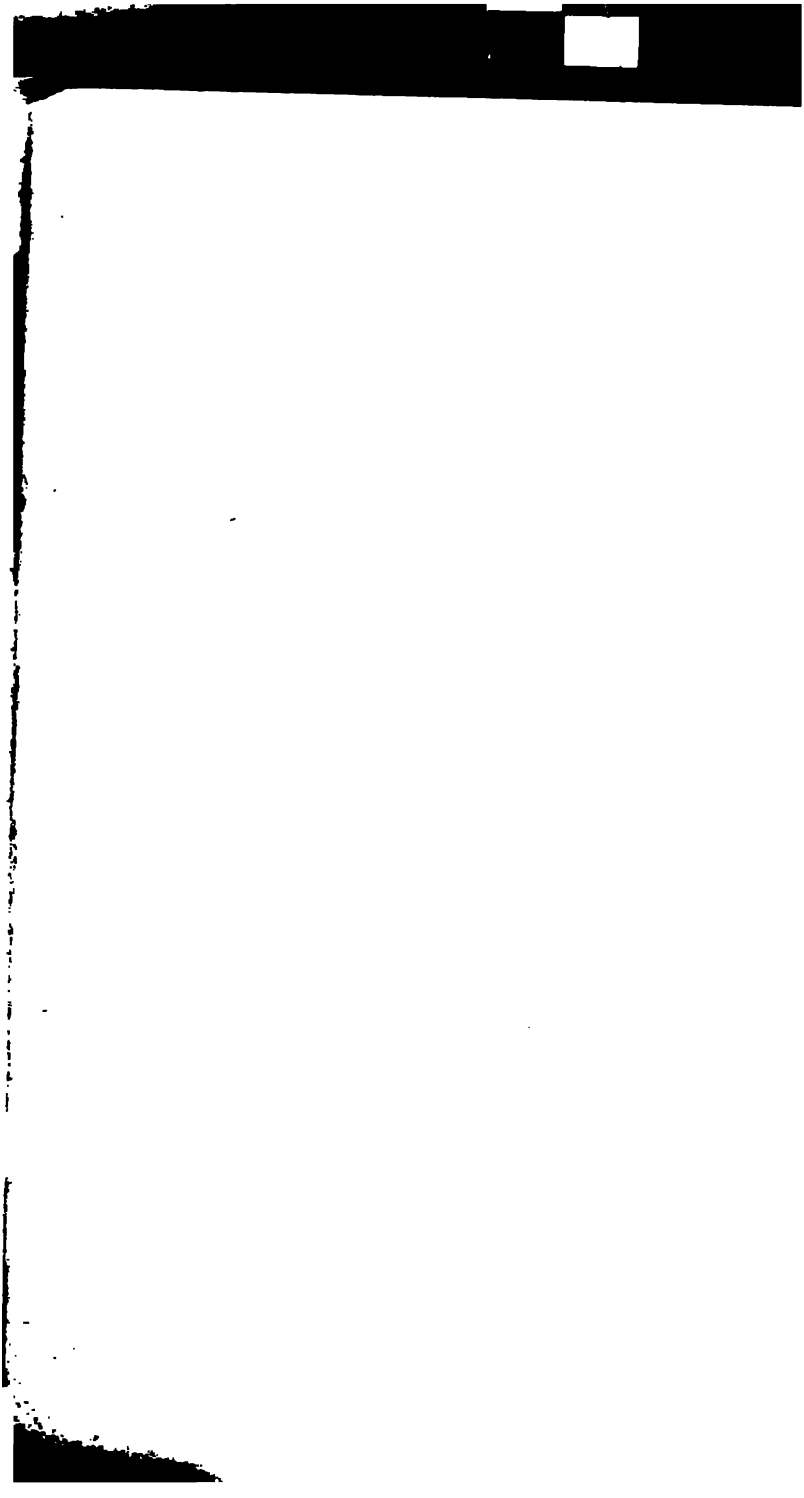

MRS. DELANY

Mrs Delany

from an original portrait by Miss Frances in the National Gallery
by the late Lady Llanover

Simond,

DELANY

GRANVILLE)

EMOIR

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PASTON

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MRS. DELANY

(MARY GRANVILLE)

A MEMOIR

1700-1788

COMPILED BY

GEORGE PASTON

With Seven Portraits in Photogravure

LONDON
GRANT RICHARDS
1900

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PREFACE

In 1861-62 *Mrs. Delany's Autobiography and Correspondence*, edited by the late Lady Llanover, was published by Mr. Bentley in six volumes, the price being five pounds the set. This edition, the size and cost of which placed it beyond the reach of the general public, has long been out of print. In 1898 I received permission from the representatives of Mrs. Delany's family to prepare an abridged or popular version of the book. In this work I have had the kind help and encouragement of the late editor's daughter, the Honourable Mrs. Herbert of Llanover, who was so good as to give me the opportunity of examining the manuscripts, pictures, embroideries, and other relics of Mrs. Delany which are now preserved at Llanover. Among the papers I found several interesting unpublished letters as well as some curious records of the social life of the period. Those that are in Mrs. Delany's own hand are inserted, in their proper order, in the body of the work, while the remainder will be found in a supplemental chapter. Mr. Ram, Q.C., another

descendant of the Granville family, was kind enough lend me a packet of Mrs. Delany's unpublished lette from which some characteristic passages are quoted.

I have to thank Messrs. Macmillan & Co., to wh Mr. Bentley's publishing rights have passed, for p mission to print extracts from the *Autobiography a Correspondence.*

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MRS. DELANY

(MARY GRANVILLE)

CHAPTER I

(1700-1717)

MRS. DELANY, born Mary Granville, was a daughter of the famous house which claims descent through the Earls of Corbeil from Rollo, first Duke of Normandy, and whose ancient lineage and territorial influence, together with the brilliant achievements of several of its members, placed it at one time in the foremost ranks of the celebrated historical families of this nation. From their kinsman William Rufus the Granvilles (or Grenvilles, as they were also spelt) received broad lands in the west country, and kept up such princely state at their seat at Stowe, near Bideford, that one Sir Roger, who flourished about the end of the fifteenth century, earned the name of the 'Great Housekeeper.' The most distinguished of Mary Granville's more immediate ancestors were Sir Richard Granville, the Elizabethan admiral, who, as the commander of the gallant *Revenge*, and the hero of 'England's naval Thermopylæ,' has been celebrated in song and story; and his grandsons, Sir Bevil, the Royalist general, who fell at the battle of Lansdown in 1643, and Sir Richard, who was known as 'the King's General in the

West.' Clarendon gives enthusiastic testimony to the character of Sir Bevil in the following passage:

'That which would have clouded any victory, and made the loss of others less spoken of, was the death of Sir Bevil Granville. He was indeed an excellent person, whose activity, interest, and reputation were the foundation of what had been done in Cornwall; and his temper and affection so public that no accident which happened could make any impression on him, and his example kept others from taking anything ill, or at least seeming to do so. In a word, a brighter courage and a gentler disposition were never married together to make the most cheerful and innocent conversation.'

At the time of his death Sir Bevil had in his pocket a letter from Charles I. acknowledging his services, and a patent for the earldom of Bath, a title that was taken up by his eldest son, John, after the Restoration. His youngest son, Bernard, who was the messenger chosen to convey to Charles II. the news that he was invited to return to his kingdom, left three sons and two daughters: Sir Bevil, Governor of Barbadoes; George, Secretary of State for War under Queen Anne, created Baron Lansdowne in 1711; Bernard, the father of Mrs. Delany; Anne, Maid of Honour to Queen Mary, and afterwards married to Sir John Stanley; and Elizabeth, who died unmarried.

Colonel Bernard Granville, who, as the younger son of a younger son, occupied the position of a poor gentleman with a famous name, does not appear to have mended his fortune by his marriage with the beautiful daughter of Sir Martin Westcombe, Consul at Cadiz. Mary, the eldest daughter, afterwards Mrs. Delany, was born at Coulston, in Wiltshire, on May 14, 1700. It was

consequence probably of her parents' narrow means that the little girl, at the age of eight, was adopted by her childless aunt, Lady Stanley, who was then living in apartments at Whitehall, Sir John being secretary to the Lord Chamberlain. At first Mary, who had already spent two years at a school kept by a French refugee, found the lonely grandeur of Whitehall but a poor exchange for the fun and frolic of her school life. 'My uncle and aunt,' she observes in a fragment of autobiography written late in life, 'though very kind to me, were too grave and serious to supply the place of the companions I had left. But I soon found new companions to cheer me for those I had lost. The fine Gothic gate which divided Whitehall, commonly called the cock-pit, from King Street was inhabited by Hyde, Earl of Rochester. Lord Hyde, the Earl of Rochester's eldest son, married Miss Lewson, daughter of Lord Gower, and grand-daughter of Sir Bevil Granville, and they and their large family at this time all lived with Lord Rochester, and I soon grew into great intimacy with my young cousins. But chiefly my acquaintance was with Miss Catherine, afterwards the celebrated Duchess of Queensberry, who was exactly my own age, and whose wit, beauty, and oddities made her from her early years, when she was "Kitty, beautiful and young," to the end of a long life a general object of animadversion, censure, and admiration. . . .

'In the year 1710 I first saw Mr. Handel, who was introduced to my uncle by Mr. Heidegger, the famous manager of the opera, and the most ugly man that ever was formed. We had no better instrument in the house than a little spinet of mine, on which that great professor performed wonders. I was much struck by his playing,

but struck as a child not as a judge, for the moment he was gone I seated myself to my instrument and played the best lesson I had then learnt. My uncle archly asked me whether I thought I should ever play as well as Mr. Handel. "If I did not think I should," cried I, "I would burn my instrument." Such was the innocent presumption of childish ignorance.'

The autobiographical fragment ends with this anecdote, but in a series of letters, written at the request of her friend the Duchess of Portland, in 1740, Mrs. Delany gives many interesting reminiscences of her eventful youth. The persons mentioned are designated by fictitious names, the key to which was given by Mrs. Delany on a separate sheet of paper, each name having a letter of the alphabet which corresponded with those on the key. These recollections begin with the year 1714, when the death of Queen Anne made a great difference to the fortunes of the Granville family.

'The task you have set me, my dearest Maria,' writes Mrs. Delany, 'is a very hard one, and nothing but the complying with the earnest request from so tender a friend could persuade me to undertake it. You are so *well* acquainted with my family that it is unnecessary for me to inform you of the ebbs and flows that have attended it for many years: in the most prosperous time of our fortune you were not born. The death of Queen Anne made a considerable alteration in our affairs: we were of the discontented party, and not without reason; not only my father, but all my relations that were in public employments, suffered greatly by this change. My father being a younger brother, his chief dependence was on the favour of the Court and his brother's friendship; the first being withdrawn, he had recourse to the latter; he was offered by him a retre

in the country and an addition to the small remains of his fortune; he retired with my mother, my sister, and myself. Anna (my sister's name), who was then a little girl, too young to consider how such a retirement might prove to her disadvantage, was delighted with a new scene.

'I was then fifteen years of age, had been brought up under the care of my aunt Valeria [Lady Stanley], a woman of extraordinary sense, remarkably well-bred and agreeable, who had been Maid of Honour to Queen Mary, was particularly favoured and distinguished by her, and early attained all the advantages of such an education under so great and excellent a princess, without the least taint or blemish incident to that state of life so dangerous to young minds. Her penetration made her betimes observe an impetuosity in my temper, which made her judge it necessary to mortify it by mortifying my spirit, lest it should grow too lively and unruly for my reason. I own I often found it rebellious, and could ill bear the frequent checks I met with, which I too easily interpreted into indignities, and have not been able wholly to reconcile to any other character from that day to this. Nevertheless, the train of mortifications that I have met with since convince me that it was happy for me to be early inured to disappointments and vexations. Valeria was very fond of me, but too generous to deprive my father and mother of what they might think a comfort in their retirement, so upon their going into the country I quitted her and went with them.'

In an explanation appended to the above letter by Mrs. Delany, she relates that 'Alcander [Lord Lansdowne], the year after the accession of George I., was sent to the Tower at the same time with Lord Oxford.

My father, who then resided in Poland Street, upon this change in the affairs of his family, determined upon retiring into the country. He ordered two carriages to be at his door at six o'clock, and gave a charge to all his people not to mention his design, as he did not wish to take a solemn leave of his friends upon an absence of such uncertain duration. The man from whom the horses were hired, and who proved to be a spy, immediately, in hopes of a reward, gave information at the Secretary of State's office of these private orders, affirming that it was his belief the colonel and his family were going secretly out of the kingdom. I was sleeping in the same bed with my sister, when I was suddenly awakened by a disturbance in my room. My first idea was of being called to rise early in order to sit for my picture, which was then painting for my father, but the moment I looked round I saw two soldiers standing by the bedside with guns in their hands. I shrieked with terror, and started up in my bed. "Come, misses," cried one of the men, "make haste and get up, for you are going to Lord Townshend's" (then Secretary of State). I cried violently, and they desired me not to be frightened. My mother's maid was with difficulty admitted into the room to dress us. My little sister, then but nine years old, had conceived no terror from this intrusion, but when the maid was going to put on her frock, called out, "No, no, I won't wear that frock. I must wear my bib and apron; I am going to Lord Townshend's."

'When we were dressed we were carried to my father and mother, whom we found surrounded by officers and messengers, two of each and sixteen soldiers being employed about the house. My father was extremely shocked by this scene, but supported himself with t

utmost composure and magnanimity, his chief care being to calm and comfort my mother, who was greatly terrified, and fell into hysteric fits, one after the other. Here, before any removal could take place, whilst we were in the midst of our distress and alarm, my aunt Valeria forced her way into the room. Intelligence having reached her of the situation we were in, she instantly came, but was refused admittance. She was not, however, to be denied; she told the officers that she would be answerable for everything to Lord Townshend, and insisted on passing with a courage and firmness that conquered their opposition. I can never forget her meeting with my father; she loved him with the extremest affection, and could never part from him, even for a short absence, without tears. They embraced each other with the most tender sadness, and she was extremely good in consoling my poor mother. She entreated that the messengers would at least suffer her to convey them to their confinement herself in her own coach, but this they peremptorily refused. She then protested she would be responsible for carrying her two young nieces to her own house, instead of seeing them conveyed to the messenger's, and in this point she conquered, and being forced to separate from my father, she had us both put into her coach and carried to Whitehall . . .'

How Colonel Granville and his wife obtained their liberty we are not told, but it appears that in November of the same year they were allowed to leave town with their two daughters, and travelled for five days through miserable weather to their new home at Buckland, near Campden, in Gloucestershire. 'At the age that I left the fine world,' continues the narrator, 'I may own, without fear of much reproach, that I left it with regret. I

had been brought up with the expectation of being Maid of Honour, Queen Anne having put down my name for the office with her own hand. I had been at one play and one opera, and thought the poets' description of the Elysian fields nothing to the delights of these entertainments; I lamented the loss of my young companions, and the universal gaiety I parted with when I left London. I often repeated Mr. Pope's verses to a young lady on her leaving the town after the coronation. And to make the change appear still more gloomy, all this I quitted in November, travelled through miserable roads, and in a few days after our arrival at the farm, was blocked up from all intercourse with our neighbours by as severe a frost as was ever known in England, which prevented company coming to us, or our going abroad. At that time I thought it a loss, though my father's excellent temper, great cheerfulness, and uncommon good-humour made him exert himself for our entertainment at home; and as I loved him excessively, and admired everything he said and did, I should soon have found consolation from his engaging manners, but the dejectedness of my mother's spirits, occasioned by the disappointments my father had met with in his fortune, and the not being able to give her children all the advantages in their situation she wished to do, made her unable to support herself, and often affected her to so great a degree as to prejudice her health. This hurt my father, and I felt it on a double account.

'Three months passed in this place without any variety. I was kept to my stated hours for practising, reading writing, music, and French, and after that I was expected to sit down to work. My father generally read to us In the evening I was called upon to make up a party

whist with my father and mother and the minister of the parish . . . This was our chief entertainment till Roberto [Mr. Twyford] came into the neighbourhood, a young gentleman who was driven to shelter there by some hot-headed, misguided zealots [Sir William Wyndham and others]. Their chief betrayed them, and Roberto was obliged to seek for refuge at Tranio's [Mr. Tooker] who had been a great friend of his father's. He was twenty-two, tall, handsome, lively, and good-humoured. The first Sunday after he came he met us all at church, and my father asked him to eat beef and pudding with his landlord. He came, and the next day he came again. He pleased my father extremely: they grew so fond of each other that by degrees the farm was his home, and my mother was glad to encourage his visits.

'The spring passed on tolerably well, the days brightened and lengthened, and we had compliments and visits from all our neighbours. In March Roberto left us to return home, all things being quiet in the country at that time; but he promised my father he would come and make him a visit the latter end of the year. About this time I contracted a friendship for Sappho [Sarah Kirkham, afterwards Mrs. Chapone], a clergyman's daughter in the neighbourhood. She had an uncommon genius and intrepid spirit, which, though really innocent, alarmed my father. He loved gentleness and reserve in the behaviour of women, and could not bear anything that seemed free or masculine. I was convinced of her innocence, and saw no fault in her. She entertained and flattered me, but by the improvement she has since made, I see she was not then the perfect creature I thought her. We wrote to each other every day, and met in the fields between our fathers' houses as often as we had an oppor-

tunity. Her extraordinary understanding, lively imagination, and humane disposition, which soon became conspicuous, at last reconciled my father to her, and he never after debarred me the pleasure of seeing her . . .

'At the end of the year Roberto returned according to his promise. I found his behaviour not at all what it used to be; he was often silent and thoughtful. When I came down in a morning to practise my harpsichord, he was always in the room, and he would place himself beside me while I played. Whenever I went to my favourite bench he followed me immediately. One day he took me by the hand as I was coming downstairs, and said, "He almost wished he had never known the family." After he had been a month with us my mother took notice of his being more particular in his behaviour towards me; even my little sister Anna made several observations that made Roberto blush, and me angry at her pertness. My mother cautioned me not to leave my room in a morning till she sent for me, and never permitted me to walk without a servant when she or my father could not go with me. Roberto, I believe, designed speaking to me first, in which being disappointed he applied to my father, and made proposals of marriage. He told him I had no fortune, and it was very probable, for this reason, his friends would not approve of his desire; if they did, he had so high an opinion of him that he should be well pleased with his alliance. Upon which Roberto returned home to try what he could do with his friends, but after some months' trial to get his parents to consent he wrote my father that they were inexorable. This he apprehended before he went, and pressed me very much to marry him privately, but I was offended at the propose and desired him, if he could not gain the consent

wished to have, to think no more of me. I little thought then how fatal this disappointment would prove to him. I was very easy when the affair was over, and rather glad of it.'

The following autumn Mary received an invitation to stay with her uncle Lord Lansdowne (called Alcander in the Autobiography) at Longleat. Lord Lansdowne had been confined in the Tower, on account of his Jacobite sympathies, during the past two years, and had only recently been set at liberty. The intimate friend of Pope and Swift, he was himself a poet as well as a politician, and a man of singular charm of manner. 'The invitation,' writes Mary, 'was very agreeable to me, and thought too advantageous by my father and mother to be refused. My father accompanied me himself, and delivered me into Lord Lansdowne's hand, who received me with that grace and fondness so peculiar to his politeness and good-nature. Laura [Lady Lansdowne][1] was at that time about twenty-seven years of age, very handsome, and had behaved herself very well. I soon grew fond of her, and was delighted with every mark of her favour, tho' the pleasure I received from my uncle's distinction of me far exceeded it. There was at that time a great deal of company in the house, and the design of going to Bath was put off till the spring. We danced every night, and had a good band of music in the house. Lord Lansdowne was magnificent in his nature, and valued no expense that would gratify it, which in the end hurt him and his family extremely.

'I now thought my present state and future prospects as happy as this world could make them. My father

[1] Widow of Thomas Thynne, and daughter of the first Earl Jersey. Her son, Lord Weymouth, inherited Longleat.

had thoughts of returning home, well pleased at my being in such favour, but discontented with my uncle's treatment of himself, which was not what he expected. He told him that now he should lessen his income, supposing that by this time he had fallen into a method of living in the country, and did not want so large an income as at first setting out. Alcander reminded him at the same time how kind he was to his children. These were truths, but harsh to a generous and grateful mind, such as my father's was. The day before he left Lord Lansdowne's house my father opened his mind to me, and I afterwards wished I had returned with him that I might, by tender duty and affection, show him that I preferred his house and company to all flattering views that were laid before me—but it was his pleasure that I should stay. My two aunts soon grew jealous of the great favour shown to me by my uncle, and would never suffer me to spend an hour with him alone, which mortified me extremely; for tho' I did not pretend to much penetration or judgment, I soon found their conversation much less instructive, as well as much less entertaining, than his. I had been brought up to love reading, they never read at all. Alcander delighted in making me read to him, which I did every day, till the ladies grew angry at my being so much with my uncle.

'About this time there came on a visit to Alcander an old friend and countryman of his, Gromio [Mr. Pendarves of Roscrow, Cornwall]. When he arrived we were at dinner; he sent in his name, upon which Alcander rose from table overjoyed, and insisted on his coming in to dinner. I expected to have seen some body with the appearance of a gentleman, when I

poor old dripping, almost drowned Gromio was brought into the room, like Hob out of the well. His wig, his coat, his dirty boots, his large unwieldy person, and his crimson countenance were all subjects of great mirth and observation to me. I diverted myself at his expense for several days, and was well assisted by a young gentleman, brother to Laura, who had wit and malice. Gromio soon changed his first design of going away next day. The occasion of his coming was, it was stated, a quarrel he had had with a gentleman who had married his niece. Gromio offered to settle upon him his whole estate, provided he would, after his (Gromio's) death, take his name. Bassanio [Francis Bassett], proud of his family, refused to comply, upon which Gromio determined to dispose of his estate, and settle quietly for the rest of his life in the country. In order to execute this design he was going to London, and passing near Alcander's house, heard that the family were in the country, which determined him to make his journey one day longer by calling there.

'He talked of going every day, but still stayed on, and I, to my great sorrow, was after some time convinced that I was the cause of this delay; his behaviour was too remarkable for me not to observe it, and I could easily perceive that I was the only person in the family that did not approve of it. Gromio was then nearly sixty, and I seventeen years of age. You may readily believe I was not pleased with what I suspected. I formed an invincible aversion to him, and everything he said or did by way of obliging me increased that aversion. I thought him ugly and disagreeable. He was fat, much afflicted with gout, and often sat in a sullen mood, which I conclude was from the gloominess of his temper. I

knew that of all men living my uncle had the greatest opinion of and esteem for him, and I dreaded his making a proposal of marriage, as I knew it would be accepted. In order to prevent it I did not in the least disguise my great dislike to him. I behaved myself not only with indifference, but with rudeness; when I dressed I considered what would become me least; if he came into the room when I was alone I instantly left it, and took care to let him see I quitted it because he came there. I was often chid by my aunts for this behaviour. I told them plainly he was odious to me, in hopes they would have had good nature enough to have prevented what I saw; but Laura called me childish, ignorant, and silly, and said that if I did not know what was for my own interest my friends must judge for me.

'Gromio was some time debating with himself whether he should declare his sentiments for me or not, conscious of the great disparity of years, and often staggered, as he told me afterwards, by my behaviour, but at last a violent fit of jealousy, raised by Vilarios' [Mr. Villiers] gallantry towards me, which I only took for very undesigning merriment, made him resolve to address himself to Alcander, and make such proposals as he thought might gain his consent. Lord Lansdowne, rejoiced at the opportunity of securing to his interest by such an alliance one of some consequence in his country, whose services he at that time wanted, readily embraced the offer, and engaged for my compliance; he might have said *obedience*, for I was not entreated but commanded. One night, at one of our concerts, all the company (I suppose by agreement) went into the room where the music was performed. I got up to follow them, but my uncle called me back and desired I would bear him company, for he was lam

and could not walk into the next room. My spirits forebode what he was about to say, and when he bade me shut the door, I turned as pale as death. He took me by the hand, and after a very pathetic speech of his love and care of me, of my father's unhappy circumstances, my own want of fortune, and the little prospect I had of being happy if I disobliged those friends who were desirous of serving me, he told me of Gromio's passion for me, and his offer of settling his whole estate upon me. He then, with great art and eloquence, told me all his good qualities and vast merit, and how despicable I should be if I could refuse him because he was not young and handsome; and that if I did refuse him, he should conclude that my inclinations were engaged to Roberto, a name that I had not heard nor thought of for above half a year—a name that had never before given me much disturbance, though now it added to my distress.

'How can I describe to you, dear friend, the cruel agitation of my mind! Whilst my uncle talked to me, I did not once interrupt him: surprise, tender concern for my father, a consciousness of my own little merit, and the great abhorrence I had to Gromio, raised such a confusion of thoughts in my mind that it deprived me of the power of utterance, and after some moments' silence I burst into tears. Alcander grew warm upon this mark of my distress, and said, "I see, madam, you are not to be gained by merit; and if Roberto is the obstacle to my friend's happiness, and he ever dares to come to this house, I will have him dragged through the horse-pond." Such an expression from a man of my uncle's politeness made me tremble, for it plainly showed me how resolute and determined he was, and how vain it would be for me to urge any reason against his resolution. With great

difficulty I said I was so sensible of his goodness to me, and of the gratitude I owed him, that I would submit to his demands, but must beg leave at that time to retire, and that he would excuse my appearing any more that evening. He gave me my liberty, and by a back way I avoided the company, and went to my own apartment, locked myself up in my closet, where I wept bitterly for two hours. Several messengers came to the door to call me, and at last my uncle sent me word he absolutely insisted on my coming to supper. Nothing could be at that time more vexatious to me, but I proposed one consolation, which was that Gromio and the rest of the family should see how unacceptable the proposal that had been made to me that afternoon was.

'I shall not disguise my thoughts, or soften any part of my behaviour, which, I fear, was not altogether justifiable, and which, though your judgment will condemn, your indulgence and partiality will find some excuse for. I thought that if I could convince Gromio of the great dislike I had to him, that he would not persist, but I was disappointed in that view. I had nobody to advise with; every one of the family had persuaded themselves that this would be an advantageous match for me, no one considered the sentiments of my heart. To be settled in the world, and ease my friends of my expense and care, they urged that it was my duty to submit, and that I ought to sacrifice everything to that one point. I acted as they wished me to do, and for fear of their reproaches made myself miserable: my chief motive, I may say, was the fear of my father and mother suffering if I disobliged Alcander. I then recollected the conversation I had with my father the day before he left us. I considered that my being provided for would be a great satisfaction

to him, and might be the means of establishing a good understanding between the brothers; that if I showed the least reluctance my father and mother would never consent to the match, and that would inevitably expose them as well as myself to Alcander's resentment. These considerations gave me courage, and kept up my resolution.'

CHAPTER II

(1717-1724)

As soon as Mary's consent had been wrung from her, her uncle sent to invite her parents to the wedding, and directly they arrived the ceremony took place. 'I was married with *great pomp*,' she writes. 'Never was one dressed out in gayer colours, and when I was led to the altar, I wished from my soul I had been led, as Iphigenia was, to be sacrificed. I was sacrificed. I lost not life, indeed, but all that makes life desirable—joy and peace of mind; but although it was plain to all the witnesses of this sad scene how much I suffered in it, no one showed any sensibility of it, except my father and mother, the only persons from whom I wished to hide my distress. They persuaded themselves, however, that my great trouble arose from the thought of leaving so many friends, and not from the dislike I had to Gromio, which gave me a happy opportunity of relieving my oppressed heart. I stayed about two months at Alcander's after I was married, and Gromio showed me all the respect and tenderness he was capable of, and I returned it with all the complacency I was mistress of, and had he known how much it cost me he must have thought himself obliged by my behaviour.

'An incident occurred one day at dinner that disconcerted me a good deal. A gentleman who came to dinner said he had heard a very melancholy story of a

neighbour of his, for whom he had a great regard, and after giving him a very extraordinary character, he said, "Poor Roberto, he is struck with a dead palsy." I blushed excessively, and felt a grateful compassion for a man who had always expressed a very particular regard for me. I could not help thinking I might perhaps have been the unfortunate cause of his misfortune, as in truth I was, though I did not know that till some years after his death. I was then told by a lady, a great friend of his, to whom he used to open his mind, that his mother's cruel treatment of him, and absolute refusal of her consent for his marrying me, affected him so deeply as to throw him into the palsy. He lost the use of his speech, though not of his senses, and when he strove to speak, he could not utter above a word or two, but he used to write perpetually, and I was the only subject of his pen. He lived in this wretched state about a year after I was married. When he was dead they found under his pillow a piece of cut paper which he had stolen out of my closet at the farm.'

The day came at last when the young wife was to leave all that she loved and valued, and go to a remote part of the country with the husband whom she could only look upon as her tyrant and her gaoler. Her one consolation was that her eldest brother, Bernard, was allowed to accompany her.

'We were about a fortnight on the road,' she writes, 'for Gromio being desirous of introducing me to all his friends, we went to all that were in our way, instead of going to an inn, which was very disagreeable to me, who would much rather have hid myself in a cave than have been exposed to the observation of anybody. I met with great civility and flattery from all, but

received no satisfaction from anything but a few stolen retired moments, to vent my grieved heart by my tears, which I took great care should not be seen by Gromio, for I wished to deceive him in that particular, and believe I succeeded. . . .

'You say I have omitted giving you his character; 'tis true I have not been very particular in it. I fear I am not good at drawing characters, and that my prejudice is too strong to admit of my doing him justice. His age I have already told you; as to his person, he was excessively fat, of a brown complexion, negligent in his dress, and took a vast quantity of snuff, which gave him a dirty look. His eyes were small, black, lively, and sensible; he had an honest countenance, but altogether a person rather disgusting than engaging. He was good-natured and friendly, but so strong a *party man* [*i.e.* a Jacobite], that he made himself many enemies, and was at one time involved in *such difficulties* that it was great good luck that he escaped being discovered. He was very sober for two years after we married, but then he fell in with a set of old acquaintances, a society famed for excess in wine, and to his ruin and my misery was hardly ever sober. This course of life soured his temper, which was naturally good, and the days he did not drink were spent in a gloomy, sullen way, which was infinitely worse to me than his drinking, for I did not know how to please or entertain him, and yet no one ever heard him say a cross or snappish thing to me. . . .

'When we arrived at Averno [Roscrow Castle] I was indeed shocked. The castle is guarded with high walls that entirely hide it from your view. When the gate of the court was opened, and we walked in, the front of the castle terrified me. It is built of ugly, coarse stone, old

and mossy, and propt with two great stone buttresses, and so it had been for threescore years. I was led into an old hall that had scarcely any light belonging to it; on the left hand was a parlour, the floor of which was rotten in places, and part of the ceiling broken down, and the windows were placed so high that my hand did not come near the bottom of them. Here my courage forsook me at once, and I fell into a violent passion of crying, and was forced to sit down some minutes to recover myself. My behaviour, to be sure, shocked Gromio, and I was sorry that I had not a greater command of myself; but my prison appeared so dismal I could not bear the surprise, not expecting to see so ruinous a place.'

It may appear strange to modern eyes that the friends and relations of Mary Granville, who really desired her welfare, should have forced her into this most unnatural marriage. But it must be remembered that in the early part of the eighteenth century *mariages de convenance* were as much the rule in England as they are in France at the present day. Moreover, the fate of the poor gentlewoman who failed to secure a husband was a melancholy one. The only profession open to her was that of teaching, for which the chances were that her education did not qualify her. Failing that, she was doomed to act as waiting-woman to some great lady, or else to drag out her days in a state of genteel pauperism, an undesired burden upon her more prosperous relations. Lord Lansdowne probably believed that he was doing the best thing possible for his niece's future when he obtained for her a well-to-do husband and a comfortable home. It was anything but a sentimental age, and emotions were regarded as luxuries that only the rich could afford to cultivate. If Mary Granville had lived in the present day she would

probably have aired her woes in a problem novel, would certainly have posed as a *femme incomprise*, and might even have consoled herself with the attentions of a younger lover. As it was, the little eighteenth-century heroine, realising that her marriage was an accomplished fact which no amount of repining could alter, determined to make the best of a bad business, devote herself to the comfort of her gouty old lord, and get what little brightness and pleasure she could out of her new surroundings.

The first few months of Mrs. Pendarves's married life were spent in exploring the country on horseback with her brother, in fitting up the old castle according to her own fancy, and in receiving the neighbours, who flocked to pay their compliments to the bride. Unfortunately, any pleasure that Mary might have taken in her new acquaintances was quickly checked by the discovery that her husband was of a furiously jealous temperament. So unreasoning were his suspicions that Mary declared she would rather have seen a lion walk into the house than any one whose person or address could alarm her husband.

Mr. Pendarves's jealousy was first aroused by the attentions paid to Mary by his nephew, Mr. Basset; but in spite of his perturbation, he freely acknowledged that he had nothing to charge her with, her behaviour being all that he could desire. A more alarming incident was a declaration of love from a young married man, who, in consequence of having lost his fortune, was invited to make a long stay at Roscrow. Mary, who could not accuse herself of having given the slightest encouragement to the guest, found herself placed in a cruel dilemma. She dared not give her husband a hint of the young man's conduct, and yet she knew that there could be no safety for her as long as he remained in the house. The repulsed

lover seems to have contemplated suicide, for he asked one of the servants for a pistol, and when told there was none in the house looked very gloomy and discontented. The servant warned his master, and Mr. Pendarves, who fancied that the guest's despair was caused by his money troubles, informed him that they were 'obliged to leave home for some time,' the accepted formula for politely putting an end to the interminable visits of the period.

'Gromio seemed very happy and well satisfied with my behaviour,' continues Mary, 'and if I showed no delight in being in his company, I took care he should have no reason to accuse me of preferring any other to it. I never made any visits without him, and as he was often confined with the gout, I always worked and read in his chamber. My greatest pleasure was riding, but I never indulged myself in that exercise unless he proposed it, and I must do him the justice to say he was very obliging in his behaviour to me. . . .

'In this manner two years passed. I was happier in the third; business obliged Gromio to go to London, and my father and mother and sister came to stay with me in his absence. O happy year! that made me some amends for all I had suffered. My sister, though very young, had now grown very conversable and entertaining, and I took great delight in her company. We went to every place in the country that was worth seeing; and my father, whose family had been so long distinguished and respected in that country, was much caressed by all the neighbourhood, and had extraordinary civilities paid him. . . .

'Gromio wrote to me by every post, and his affairs obliging him to spend another year in London, he desired me to come to him when my friends returned home. I

was I own, very well pleased at the thought of seeing once more a place where I had been bred up, and those friends who had had the care of me; but those joys were damped to so great a degree by *one* thought, that I should have preferred banishment from all I loved to the enjoyment of their company, since by doing that I could not avoid the person who made my life miserable.'

On arriving in town Mary found that her husband had taken a house in what was even then a very unpleasant part of Soho, and that he had invited his sister, an ill-tempered, meddling woman, to make his house her home. Worst of all, during his solitary life, Mr. Pendarves had fallen into bad company, and had taken to drowning his business worries in drink. 'Hitherto,' writes his wife, 'I had lived in affluence, and had never known the want of money. I was as prudent in the management of our domestic affairs as I thought our circumstances required; in the country I had not the demands for money that attended the life I was now engaged in, and I was so well furnished with clothes and pocket-money by Lord Lansdowne on my marriage that I had no notion of ever wanting. I will not trouble you with my distresses on that score; Gromio's excuse to me was, "Bad tenants and a cheating steward," which I truly believe was the case, though I had many hints given me by his old friends that he had some very near relations to maintain. This was the last misfortune I could have expected; I thought myself at least secure of an easy fortune. Gromio, to drown his cares, which were then very heavy on him, had recourse to the society I have already mentioned; he never was at home but when the gout confined him, and then I never left him. When he had the gout he could never bear (even in the midst of winter) the least fire in

his room, and I have read three hours together to him, trembling with cold all the time. He has often been confined six weeks together; as soon as he was able to go abroad, he returned to his society, never came home sober, and has frequently been led by two servants to bed between six and seven o'clock in the morning. Unhappy cruel state! How many tears I have shed, and what sorrow of heart I have felt!'

However, life in town was not altogether without its compensations. Mary was warmly welcomed by her aunt, Lady Stanley, and other relations, and soon found that the doors of a very gay and brilliant society stood open before her. In her letters to her sister she dwells only on the brighter side of life, and we read of a visit to the opera to hear the *Astarte* of Buononcini, upon whom the young Duchess of Marlborough had lately settled five hundred a year for life on condition that he would compose no more for the ungrateful Academy; of a water-party to Richmond with Lady Harriet Harley, at which they were entertained with excellent music, but disappointed of the company of Mrs. Anastasia Robinson, the beautiful singer, who was secretly married to Lord Peterborough; and of Mary's first masquerade, of which she writes: 'I was very much pleased, and like it so well that I hope one day to have the pleasure of going with you to one. I met with no smart people, and it was thin of company to what they used to be, but as it was the first I was ever at I did not find any faults, but a great deal of diversion.'

Lord Lansdowne, for political reasons, had gone with his family to France the year before the Pendarves came to town. 'I was much disappointed at not finding him,' writes Mary, 'for I loved him notwithstanding the

unhappy settlement he had made for me, and I hoped for some redress from him. I at first lamented the absence of Laura, from whose friendship I expected much consolation, but I found her conduct since my leaving her had been very indiscreet. I told you she was very handsome and gay; she loved admiration—a most dangerous disposition in an agreeable woman, and proved a most ruinous one to Lady Lansdowne. The libertine manners of France accomplished what her own nature was prone to. No woman could less justify herself than she could. Alcander, whom she married for love, had every agreeable quality that could make a husband amiable, and was worthy of the most constant affection. He was fond of her to excess, generous to extravagance, allowing her the command of all his fortune. He had learning and sense far beyond her capacity, with the greatest politeness and good-humour imaginable; in a word, he was as fine and finished a gentleman as in his own, or any other age, ever adorned his country. Alcander, had he married a woman of prudence, sense, and virtue, might have made a shining figure in the world; and Laura, had she married a man of a resolute, arbitrary disposition, might have made a decent wife; but she was extravagant, and given up to dissipation, and my uncle's open, unsuspecting temper gave her full liberty to indulge the vanity of her heart. I have been very particular in her character that you may the more plainly see in the progress of this little history the dangers I escaped from her example and attempts upon me; and when I considered the risks I must have run under the conduct of such a woman, I was thankful to Providence for my present situation, and that reflection reconciled me more to it than all my reasoning before could possibly do.'

Mrs. Pendarves, as a new beauty, with an elderly husband who neglected her for the bottle, soon found herself exposed to the admiration and warm attentions of the young men of fashion of the day. 'It was not my turn,' she observes, 'to be pleased with such votaries, and the apprehension of Gromio's jealousy kept me on my guard, and by a dull, cold behaviour I soon gave them to understand that they were to receive no encouragement from me.' With all her prudence and caution, however, Mary found it a difficult task to avoid being compromised by her numerous admirers. The details of these one-sided love affairs are not without interest, if only because they are illustrative of the manners and morals of society under George I. They prove, for one thing, that the many passages in the novels of the period, where the virtuous heroines find themselves involved in delicate and dangerous situations through the treachery of their admirers, are more true to life than has been generally supposed.

Mrs. Pendarves's most determined lover was the Hanoverian Ambassador, M. Fabrici, who figures in the autobiography under the name of Germanico. 'His figure,' she writes, 'was by no means agreeable, his manner forward and assured, and his age placed him among those that I could not imagine had any gallantry in their head—but I was mistaken. He was often in my company. The first time was at a ball given by one of the Foreign Ministers (the Danish Ambassador), where, unfortunately for me, he engaged me to dance with him. That gave him a pretence for talking to me whenever we afterwards met; but as I did not observe anything in his behaviour to me that could give me offence, I behaved towards him with the same

indifference I did to my general acquaintance. He was to give an entertainment of music and supper to some relations and friends of mine, and he engaged them to bring me with them. I consented, and at nine o'clock we went. We were twelve in company, and nothing could have been more gay and magnificent than the music and supper. When we sat down to table it was proposed we should sit a man and a woman; it was my place to sit at the lower end of the table, and Germanico sat next me, but I soon wished for another neighbour. He stared at me the whole night, and put me so much out of countenance that I was ready to cry. He soon checked all my pleasure in the entertainment. I showed all the signs of discontent I could, inquired if my chair was come, looked at my watch twenty times; at last, to my relief, the company broke up. I took a hood out of my pocket to put on, and Germanico gave me a paper which he said I had dropped. He led me to my chair, squeezed my hand, and offered to kiss it, but I snatched it from him with the highest resentment. I was greatly offended with his impertinence, and heartily repented of my supping there. I abhorred the wretch, and could not forgive his presumption, but how was my detestation increased a day or two after this odious supper, when, sorting some papers I had in my pocket, I found a letter from Germanico, with a passionate declaration of love! I threw it into the fire with the utmost indignation. This was the paper he pretended I had dropped from my pocket, which I took without the least suspicion.'

In spite of the lady's systematic avoidance of him, the ambassador was not discouraged. During a few weeks' stay at Windsor Mrs. Pendarves was invited by Lady Walsingham, the King's favourite, to tea in her apart-

ments at the castle. Greatly to her distress she found M. Fabrici among the guests, but she endeavoured to show him by her cool behaviour that she had a thorough contempt for him. The hostess invited Mrs. Pendarves to meet her the next evening in the Little Park, to which our heroine gladly agreed, having often wished for the privilege of walking in the enclosure which the windows of her lodgings overlooked.

The following evening at six o'clock Mrs. Pendarves was informed by a servant that Lady Walsingham awaited her in the Little Park. 'As soon as I got within the gate,' she relates, 'the servant locked me in. I walked up and down before the castle, expecting to find Lady Walsingham in Queen Elizabeth's Walk, when, to my surprise, I saw only Germanico! I started back, with the intent to return, but, recollecting that the gate was locked, I stopped for some minutes. I soon apprehended this was a plot of the audacious wretch's contrivance, and a thousand fears crowded into my mind. However, I thought it best to walk towards him with some confidence, though I trembled so much that I could hardly keep my feet. He came up to me, and threw himself upon his knees, holding my petticoat, and begged I would forgive the stratagem he had made use of for an opportunity of declaring how miserable he was upon my account. I grew so frightened and angry that I hardly heard what he said, nor can I exactly recollect what I said to him. He found it was vain for him to expect any favour from me, but still he would not let me go. At last I was so provoked that I assured him the king should be made acquainted with his presumption; that, if Lady Walsingham would not do me that justice, I had friends that would not have me insulted and persecuted in such a

manner; and that if he did not go instantly and acquaint Lady Walsingham of my being there, I would go up to the windows of the apartment where I knew the king sat after dinner, and should not scruple of making my complaint to him aloud.'

Mrs. Pendarves's distress and terror were greatly increased by the fact that the walk in which this conversation took place was overlooked by the chamber window at which her husband usually sat. It was only by a happy chance that Gromio did not see Fabrici on his knees, holding Mary by her skirt. Fortunately the lover, alarmed at her threats, asked her pardon for his boldness, and entreated that she would not ruin him by complaining of his conduct to the king. Mary replied that if he would bring Lady Walsingham to her at once, and never speak nor even bow to her again, she would refrain from exposing him. Fabrici kept his word, and they never met but once after that dramatic interview in the Little Park.

Shortly before this time Mary had suffered the great sorrow of losing her father, to whom she had always been devoted. Mrs. Granville and her daughter Anne left Buckland after Colonel Granville's death, and settled at Gloucester. Anne was now grown, writes her sister, 'a very reasonable and entertaining companion. She had a lively genius, loved reading, and had an excellent memory. I was surprised at her understanding, and the delicacy of her sentiments delighted me still more. From that time I had perfect confidence in her, told her some of my distresses, and found great consolation and relief by this opening of my heart, and from her great tenderness and friendship for me.'

The return of Lady Lansdowne from a long residence

in Paris brought a new danger into her niece's life. The aunt's beauty was now on the decline, but her love of admiration was as strong as ever, and her stay in Paris had increased her taste for extravagance and dissipation. 'The company I met at her house,' writes Mrs. Pendarves, 'were free, libertine people, and I was often shocked. I once took courage, told her my opinion, and what the world said of her conduct. She carried it off with a laugh, but never forgave it, and from that day made use of all her arts to draw me into a share in her misconduct.'

The instrument she chose for her purpose was Lord Clare, who had for some time been her humble servant, but of whom she was now weary. An open profession of his passion for her niece was treated by Lady Lansdowne as an excellent joke, but Mary expressed great resentment at thus being insulted in her aunt's house, and for several weeks avoided every place where she might be likely to meet her admirer. One day, as she was sitting by her husband's bedside, reading aloud to him, a servant brought in a letter. It was from Lord Clare, and in it 'he deplored my unhappy situation in being nurse to an old man, and declared most passionately his admiration for me, and that he could teach me better lessons than I found in the romances which I was so fond of reading, and which made me so shy and reserved, so cruel and haughty.'

By a lucky chance Mr. Pendarves had fallen asleep, so that Mary was able, unquestioned, to destroy the letter which, to her intense indignation, she learnt had been brought by one of Lady Lansdowne's servants. This resolved her to go no more to her aunt's house, but as her avoidance of so near a relative had aroused her

husband's suspicions, she thought it prudent to go one day when she heard that Lady Lansdowne was indisposed. 'I found her alone,' she relates, 'and took the opportunity to reproach her for allowing Clario [Lord Clare] to behave himself towards me as he had done. She laughed at my prudery, as she called it, and said I was a fool. Immediately, Clario came in, and I rose to be gone, upon which she ordered him to lock the doors, which he did, and then pretended to be very humble and respectful. I entreated Laura to let me go—all to no purpose. She vowed I should not go till after supper, sent away my coach, and kept me by violence. When I found that there was to be a great deal of company I grew more composed, but did not open my lips to speak one word. Clario kept me in continual confusion all the evening with his particular attention to me, though the rest of the company were so much engaged with each other they attended to nothing else, but had they observed Clario it would not have offended them as it did me; their wonder would have been at my uneasiness, for he was thought an Adonis by that set of ladies, but in my eyes he was most despicable, and excessively vain of his person.

'When supper was over the gaiety of the company increased, and with it my uneasiness. They sung French catches, which gave me unspeakable offence, and when this was over, one of the ladies proposed that the same party should meet at her house, and desired a day might be fixed; which was accordingly done, and agreed to by everybody but me. I said I was engaged; another day was named, and I was still engaged; a third day was named, and then I resolutely said I was engaged for as many days as she could name, glad of the opportunity of

showing my detestation of so dangerous a society. Upon this they immediately broke up, and we all went to our different homes. Clario, by the treachery of Laura, stole a slight ring from me which I put off when I washed my hands after supper. It gave me some vexation, not knowing what boast or ill use he might make of it, but from that time I saw no more of him, as he left England in a few days.'

At this period one of Mrs. Pendarves's chief pleasures was to write long letters to her sister, in which she gives minute details of the fashions and follies of town life. 'When I am writing to you,' she says, 'I am so intent upon the subject that I forget all things but yourself, and by that means you can never fail of a long letter from me, for I never grow weary; and when I have finished my letter I am sorry to think the conversation is broke off, for, imperfect as it is, it gives me more satisfaction than any personal one that I meet with here. Though so many hills and vales separate our bodies, thought makes up in some measure for that misfortune, and though my eyes are shut I can see my dearest sister in my dreams.'

In these confidential epistles we hear of the grand doings at the wedding of my Lady Walpole (1724), 'Where the bride wore the handsomest and richest gold and white stuff that ever I saw, a fine point head, and brilliant earrings and cross. Everybody had favours that went. They are silver gauze six bows, and eight of narrow gold ribbon; they cost a guinea apiece, and eight hundred have already been disposed of.' Then there is an account of the fine clothes that were worn at the birthday, and of the marriage of the young widow, Lady Sunderland, to Sir Richard Sutton, at which Mary

was present as one of the bride's most intimate friends. 'I hope she will be very happy,' she writes. 'I think there is every appearance of her being so; her house is charmingly furnished with pictures, glass, tapestry, and damask, all superfine of their kind.' This sentence comes rather oddly from the pen of the young wife who had proved in her own person the fallacy of the eighteenth-century doctrine that luxury necessarily spells happiness for a woman.

In 1724 all the gaieties were put a stop to by the sudden death of Mr. Pendarves. Mary could not honestly affirm that she regretted her husband, but the manner of his death gave her a violent shock. On returning from a party one night she found that her husband, contrary to his usual custom, had reached home before her. 'He said many kind things,' she writes, 'on my having made him a good wife, and wished he might live to reward me. I never heard him say so much on that subject.' He also expressed a desire to sign his will, saying that he should feel happier when he had done so, but Mary, thinking he was low, begged him to defer it until the morrow. He slept very uneasily, drawing his breath with great difficulty. At seven o'clock, as his wife put back the curtain to get up, she was terrified to see that he was quite black in the face. At first she thought him in a fit, but presently it struck her that he was dead.

'I ran screaming out of my room,' she tells us, 'and almost out of my senses. My servant sent for an old lady, a friend of mine, who lived in the same street; she came immediately. Physicians and surgeons were sent for, but too late—they judged he had been dead about two hours. My friends were all sent to. Valeria insisted on my going home with her, which I did, and which so

offended Laura that I think she never forgave it, but I did not dare to trust her. I knew the wisdom and goodness of Sebastian [Sir John Stanley], and Valeria would be the surest refuge I could fly to at a time when I might be exposed to the insidious temptations and wicked arts of the world. I was now to enter it again on a new footing.'

CHAPTER III

(1724-1729)

After Mr. Pendarves's death it was discovered that so far from having settled his whole estate upon his wife, as he had promised, he had only left her a modest income of a few hundreds a year. This alteration in her prospects seems to have been regarded with absolute unconcern by Mrs. Pendarves, who, except for a righteous horror of debt, showed throughout her whole life a sublime indifference to the state of her exchequer. She contrived always to adapt her needs to her income, and yet to hold her own in the most brilliant society of her day.

The first months of widowhood were spent with Sir John and Lady Stanley, either in town or at their country villa at Northend. The period of mourning was scarcely half over before more lovers appeared upon the scene. The first of these was Mr. Henry Monk, a nephew of Sir John's, who is described as a lively, good-humoured young man, but uncultivated, with a moderate understanding, and no knowledge of the world. Sir John supported his suit, much to the surprise and mortification of his niece, for she was unable to understand how suitability of fortune could make her uncle desire to see her mated to so unsuitable a person. The declared suitor was soon dismissed, but there was another, undeclared, who was far more dangerous to the young widow's peace

of mind. This was Lord Baltimore, who, with his sister, Mrs. Hyde, had been introduced to Mrs. Pendarves some years before her husband's death, and had been numbered among her most intimate friends. In the autobiography Lord Baltimore, under the name of Herminius, is described as 'a young man in great fashion at that time, very handsome, genteel, polite, and unaffected. . . . He behaved with the greatest respect imaginable, and with so much reserve that I had not the least suspicion of his having any particular attachment to me, but I feared his growing particular, though from a different motive to what I had feared it in others. I thought him more agreeable than any one I had ever known, and consequently more dangerous.'

Mrs. Pendarves's widowhood had lasted only six months when Lord Baltimore sent to know if she would allow him to wait upon her. She could not refuse his request, and 'Herminius' continued very assiduous in his visits. 'His manner,' she writes, 'gave me reason to believe that he had a particular regard for me, and I confess I wished it might be so; and it gave me resolution absolutely to refuse Henricus [Mr. Monk].' While this pseudo-courtship drifted on, Mary, whose heart was more engaged than she cared to avow, writes to her sister in the best of spirits, and gives an animated account of her thoughts, occupations, and amusements. In November 1726 she writes from Northend:

'To-morrow we shall go to London. We dine with Sir John at Somerset House: at four o'clock in the afternoon comes my lawyer and my tailor, two necessary animals. Next morning I send for Mr. Woodfields to alter my white tabby and my new clothes, and to take my black velvet to make; then comes Mr. Boreau to clip

my locks, then I dress to visit Lady Carteret,[1] then I come home to dinner, then I drink coffee after dinner, then I go to see my niece Bassett and Mrs. Livingstone, then they reproach me, then I give them as good as they bring, then we are good friends again, then I come back, then if it is a possible thing I will write to mamma, and then sup and go to bed . . . Last Saturday I was at *Camilla* with Lady Carteret. That morning I was entertained with Cuzzoni. Oh, how charming! How did I wish for all I love to be with me at that instant! My senses were ravished with harmony. They say we shall have operas in a fortnight, but I think Madame Sandoni and Faustina are not agreed about their parts. . . .'

'*Jan.* 26, 1727.

'This day dines here Lord and Lady Fitzwilliam and the charming Faustina, who is the most agreeable creature in the world, and we are to have our senses ravished by her melodious voice. Oh, that you had wings! Mrs. Legh is transported with joy at living once more in "dear London," and hearing Mr. Handel's operas performed by Faustina, Cuzzoni, and Senesino. To add to her joys some one has presented her with a pelican, crane, and a little St. Anthony in wood. I design to get her a pig, and send it by the porter, for a St. Anthony is nothing without his pig!'

The fascinating Herminius still continued his wooing after rather an erratic fashion. We learn from the autobiography that on one occasion he invited Mrs. Pendarves to a party on the river. 'He said his sister was ready to wait on me, and desired me to take what company I pleased; he had bespoke a barge

[1] Lord Carteret was related to Mrs. Pendarves through his mother, Lady Grace Granville, daughter of the first Earl of Bath.

of musick to attend us. The temptation was almost irresistible, but I thought it not prudent, and refused all his entreaties, at which he left me, disappointed and chagrined, and instead of going on the water he went to the tennis-court, where a ball struck him between the eyes and knocked him down. All the company thought him killed, and he was carried to his sister's house weltering in his blood, but with some signs of life. His sister sent me a letter to inform me of this, and to beg to see me as soon as possible. The next day I went to town. When I came to Charlotte's house, I found her drowned in tears, and under the greatest apprehension for her brother's life. He had lost so great a quantity of blood that he was reduced to the lowest weakness. He said he wished extremely to see me, and begged of me to go to his bedside. I could not bring myself to do it, and was resolute in my refusal, and poor Charlotte thought me inhuman; but I left her with a promise that if he continued as ill the next day, and desired to see me, I would not refuse him. At length his youth prevailed, and he grew better. I avoided going to town, thinking it sufficient to send and inquire after him.

'Soon after Herminius going out of town, I received a letter from him to return me thanks for the concern I had expressed in him, and to assure me that his recovery was more owing to that than to the skill of his physicians, and concluding with some warm expressions of his great regard. I went to Tunbridge at the end of that season, but heard nothing of him. At my return to town he came to see me, and told me he was going to make a tour abroad for three months, and had fitted up a little vessel for that purpose; that he had great lowness of spirits, partly occasioned by his late accident at tennis, and some

vexation he had met with; that before he left he had a request to make to me, which, if I knew how great his regard was for me, and how much his happiness depended on it, I would not refuse him. He paused, and I was in such confusion I could not say a word, nor could I guess what this earnest request was to be. At last he begged me to give him my picture in miniature to take with him. I told him it could not be, I did not think it right, and I hoped he would not be offended at my refusing it. He looked vexed and disappointed, but made me a thousand expressions of love and esteem.

'So we parted, neither of us pleased with the other; I looked upon him as a *flatterer*, and was at a loss to know what his intentions were.'

While this unsatisfactory romance lingered on, Mrs. Pendarves kept up her sisterly correspondence in her usual sprightly vein. From her journal-letters we learn that Mary, always an enthusiast for good music, is a frequent visitor to the opera, and that she divides her affections between Cuzzoni and the Faustina, the latter being described as 'the most delightful person in the world except the Lord Mayor!' In a letter written on October 5, 1727, she writes, 'I was at Court last Thursday morning, and the king asked me if I had been in Cornwall, for he had not seen me for a great while. The queen has on her petticoat for the Coronation twenty-four thousand pounds' worth of jewels.'

In a letter dated 'the day after the Coronation,' a full and particular description is given of that imposing ceremony. By dint of setting out at half-past four in the morning, being squeezed nearly flat, and losing her cloak, Mrs. Pendarves obtained a good seat in Westminster Hall, whence the procession started, and whither their

majesties returned to dine. 'The dresses of the ladies were becoming,' she writes, 'and most of them immensely rich. Lady Delawar was one of the best figures; the Duchess of Queensberry depended so much upon her native beauty that she despised all adornment, nor had not one jewel, riband, or puff to set her off, but everybody thought she did *not* appear to advantage. The Duchess of Richmond pleased everybody: she looked easy and genteel, with the utmost sweetness in her countenance. In short, all the ladies, young and middle-aged, though not handsome, looked agreeable and well. . . .

'The queen never was so well liked: her clothes were extravagantly fine, though they did not make show enough for the occasion, but she walked gracefully, and smiled on all as she passed by. . . . Princess Anne and her two sisters held up the tip of the train; they were dressed in stiff bodices of silver tissue with diadems on their heads, and purple mantles edged with ermine. After those walked the Duchess of Dorset and Lady Sussex, two ladies of the bedchamber in waiting; then the two finest figures of all the procession, Mrs. Herbert and Mrs. Howard, the bedchamber women in waiting, in gowns also, but so rich, so genteel, so perfectly well-dressed, that any description must do them an injury.

'I could hardly see the king, for he walked much under his canopy. The room was finely illuminated; there were eighteen hundred candles besides those on the tables, and all were lighted in three minutes by an invention of Mr. Heidegger's. It was not disagreeable to be taken note of by one's acquaintance when they appeared to so much advantage, for everybody I knew came under the place where I sat to offer me meat and drink, which was drawn up from below into the galleries by baskets at the

end of a long string, which they filled with cold meat and bread, sweetmeats, and wine.'

The next grand piece of gaiety was the Lord Mayor's feast to which the king and queen went in state. Mrs. Pendarves and her party were bidden to dine at the Lady Mayoress' own table, 'an honour not to be refused, and indeed it was a very particular favour.' 'Masquerades,' she continues, 'are gone out of fashion, but there is to be a barefaced entertainment in the shape of subscription balls.' In spite of all her frivolities, Mary found time to keep up her reading. At one period she is engaged upon a long-forgotten tragedy of Lord Orrery's, at another she is enjoying one of the interminable French romances that formed the favourite reading of fine ladies in the reign of George II. She, who throughout her life showed a positive genius for friendship, is charmed with a passage in St. Evremond to the effect that friendship 'softens and mitigates old afflictions, and raises good fortune to a double pitch of felicity. Without the communication of a real friend, sorrow would sink one to the lowest ebb, and pleasures lose half their advantage.' Again she quotes with enthusiasm: 'Epicurus declares it his opinion that wisdom among all the ingredients of happiness has not a nobler, a richer, or a more delightful one than friendship. I could hug the old philosophers whenever I meet with a passage that speaks my own sentiments. The book that has obliged me with this sentence has no meaner person for its author than Cicero, and the title is *Tully of Moral Ends*. I have read but half yet, and though I quote Epicurus, I at present have no vast opinion of him, but Cicero charms me with his eloquence, and I am delighted to have that sensual philosopher confuted in his false opinions.'

Perhaps Mrs. Pendarves regarded friendship and philosophy as consolations which might in some degree recompense her for the strange behaviour of her lover, though judging from her letters her spirits were not as yet much affected by his vacillation. She writes from Northend in May 1728:

'Oh, the charming month of May—charming, charming May. June succeeds May, and, please God, I will be with you before the 1st of July. . . . Last week as we were sauntering in the King's Road to take a little air, we met Princess Amelia on her way to the Bath. She is carried in a chair, not being able to bear the motion of a coach; our coach was very close to her, and she looked very smiling and pretty, bowed to us all, and asked who we were. I wish the Bath may do her good, for she has lived a life of misery, and everybody commends her temper. . . . Pray what cavaliers have you now at Gloucester? My Lord Essex has lost his only son, but a new match at Newmarket will dispel his grief. I doubt my aunt is very bad, but she will not own it, nor do any one thing she is ordered . . . London is so full of entertainment that if I lived a polite life I should not have one moment my own. There is to be four opera nights more, and then adieu to harmony of that kind for ever and ever. Next Wednesday the Duke of Norfolk gives a masquerade; everybody is to be extravagantly fine, and to pull off their masks before they leave the house. . . .

'I hope your waxworks will not leave Glos'ter till I come, for I have had no opportunity of seeing it in London, for you must know in London it is as bad as incontinence to go out privately in a hackney-coach betimes in the morning, and we are such sanctified souls in this part of the world that 'tis insurmountable scandal

to see a nudity. I find country innocence is not so soon shocked. Perhaps Gloucester air may give me courage to view the wonderful works of Nature; but without bantering, it is a sight I have long wanted to see, and am told by everybody 'tis worth my curiosity.'

The opera played a great part in Mrs. Pendarves's life, and Mr. Handel was her idol. 'Yesterday I was at the rehearsal of the new opera composed by Mr. Handel,' she had written a few months earlier. 'I liked it extremely, but the taste of the town is so depraved that nothing will be approved of but burlesque. The *Beggars' Opera* entirely triumphs over the Italian one. I have not yet seen it, but everybody says it is very comical, and full of humour; the songs will soon be published, and I will send them to you. . . . The opera will not survive after this winter; I wish I was a poet worthy the honour of writing its elegy. I am certain, except some few, the English have *no real taste for musick*; for if they had, they could not neglect an entertainment so perfect in its kind for a parcel of ballad-singers. I am so peevish about it, that I have no patience. M. Voltaire's *Henriade* is not yet come out; 'tis writ in French, which for your sake I am sorry for. You may remember in his criticism on Milton a passage he takes notice of, and finds great fault with—of the allegory of Sin and Death—upon which my Lord Hervey said of Voltaire, who has not the reputation of being the best man in the world:

> '"So much confusion, so wicked, and so thin,
> He seems at once a Chaos, Death and Sin."

'He spoke it extempore.'

Mrs. Pendarves was always a loyal subject, in spite of the former Jacobite leanings of her family, and she

seldom failed to pay her duty at Court on the occasion of a Royal birthday or other state ceremony. In March 1729 she writes: 'On Saturday, the 1st day of March, it being the queen's birthday, I dressed myself in all my best array, borrowed my Lady Sunderland's jewels, and made a tearing show. I went with my Lady Carteret and her two daughters. There was a vast Court, and Lady Carteret got with some difficulty to the circle, and after she had made her curtsey, made me stand before her. The queen came up to her, and thanked her for bringing me forward, and told me she was *obliged to me* for my pretty clothes, and admired my Lady Carteret's extremely. She told the queen they were my fancy, and that I drew the pattern. Her Majesty said she had heard that I could draw very well (I can't think who could tell her such a story). She took notice of my jewels; I told her they were my Lady Sunderland's. "Oh," says she, "you were afraid I should think Lord Selkirk gave them to you, but I believe he only admires, for he will not be so free of his presents." I think it is a great condescension after this to correspond with a country girl!

'At night sure nothing but the Coronation could exceed the squeezing and the crowding that was there. However, a little to compensate the fatigues I had undergone, it was my fortune to be thrown in the way of Lord Baltimore, who very gallantly got me a seat, and sate down beside me. His aunt, Lady Betty Lee, was opposite to us. I asked him why he would not go and pay his duty to her. "He hated to look at her," he said, "she was so confoundedly ugly," and that he should be a happy man were I as ugly. . . .

'The Duchess of Queensberry, to the great amazement

Catherine Hyde Duchess of Queensberry

Mrs. Pendarves kept up a correspondence with her old friend Sally Chapone, *née* Kirkham, but Mrs. Chapone's epistolary style was sometimes too pedantic to please the simpler taste of her correspondent. Writing to Anne Granville in March 1728, Mary observes:

'Sally's letters are what I prize next to yours, but her last was too *crabbed* to please me. She confounds me with her ideas. I would much rather that she would descend to the style that I am acquainted with, for I cannot deny my ignorance, which is so great that I do not comprehend her logic, and I really think she has cramped her way of writing extremely. The beauty of writing (in my opinion) consists in telling our sentiments in an easy, natural way; whatever expressions seem laboured must disgust, unless they discourse on an abstruse subject, and then it must be treated accordingly. Without partiality to you, you have attained that art in writing which alone makes it delightful; your sense is so intelligible that it is known at first sight, whereas Sally's is in masquerade, and I must examine the sentence more than once to find her out; but she has fallen into this way since her being the *half of a parson*, for her letters used to please as well as interest. . . .

'The Duchess of Queensberry is still the talk of the town. She has great reason to regret her usage, but she was provoking first, and her answer, though it shows spirit, was not worded as her friends could have wished: good manners ought to be observed to our equals, and our superiors certainly have a right to it. My Lady Hervey told her the other day that now she was banished the Court had lost its chief ornament. The Duchess replied, "I am entirely of your mind." It is thought

my Lady Hervey spoke to her with a sneer; if so, her grace's answer was a very good one.'

'*April* 1*st*, 1729.

'Lord and Lady Fitzwilliam, after five-and-twenty years of tolerable agreement, are going to be divorced. I think if I could live five-and-twenty years with a man I could live five hundred. Nobody knows why they part, but they are *peevish with one another*; 'tis monstrous to think, with so many children all grown up to be men and women, that they should expose themselves and their children to the calumny of the world. As for the men, the world is apt to forget their misconduct, but young ladies, whose fate depends a good deal upon the conduct of their parents, must suffer. It is injustice, but it is the common way of speaking; who will venture on the daughter when the mother has proved such a wife? . . . Fine encouragement this to wedlock. Shall I devote my life, my heart, to a man, that after all my painful services will be glad of an opportunity to quarrel with me? What security have I more than my neighbours to defend me from such a fate? I am frail, my temper is apt to be provoked, and *liberty of speech* all womankind has thought their privilege, and hard it is to be denied what so long has been allowed our prerogative. The greatest chance for avoiding such a misfortune will be choosing a man of sense and judgment. But there's the difficulty; *moneyed men* are most of them covetous, disagreeable wretches; *fine men*, with titles and estates, are coxcombs; those of real merit are seldom to be found.'

The young widow's thoughts were evidently running a good deal on men and matrimony, for in a later letter she

says, after recommending her sister to read Madame de Sévigné: 'You may take all my lovers amongst you, and try what you can make out of them. Let me see, there is first Don Diego, solemn and stately, and, if you will take his own word, well read in all arts and sciences. *Passive obedience and non-resistance* is his text, and the doctrine that he will teach with vengeance. The next is a deserter; he can be of no use, he was a pretty plaything enough, could sing and dance, but as he has listed under another banner, I strike him out of my list. Now, as to those others laid to my charge, I declare myself not guilty. The first in quality is an Adonis in person, but his mind, alas! how idle, how vain! However, he would make a pretty show by a fair lady's side in a fine berline, with six prancing Flanders mares; and as for his domestic behaviour, he would acquit himself as well as most of his neighbours, but as that won't satisfy me, I deliver him over to society; perhaps they will accept of him on his own terms. An alderman, a councillor, and two or three more such odd animals, I will send down in a bag together, and you may cast lots for them; they are not worth my wearing. They may do well enough in the country, but they are as awkward here as if I was to wear a *commode*.' A commode was a large head-dress, even then regarded as old-fashioned, which raised the hair and the front part of the cap to a great height. The line,

'From under high commodes, with looks erect'

appears in a poem of Lord Lansdowne's.

It was in Christmas week of the year 172
spun-out love affair with Lord Baltimore
an abrupt conclusion. It will be remembe
last instalment of the autobiographical
related how the lover, after an unsatisfa
with his lady, had gone to sea in his yacht.
away the greater part of the winter, and it wa
his boat had been wrecked, and all hands l
much lamented by everybody,' writes Mrs. P
her usual restraint, 'and I own I was not
the occasion. One night as I was at the
who should I see in the crowd but Hermini
way up to the circle. As soon as he had be
the king he came up to me: he looked dej
which I attributed to the great fatigues he h
As soon as I could get a seat he came and
me, and expressed great satisfaction at seei
I felt in some confusion, and to disguise it
his stratagem of giving out that he was cas
how his friends would lament him."

that I was *much concerned*, and felt great satisfaction at seeing him safe returned. I had no sooner said the words than I accused myself of having said too much, and was in such confusion that I was glad to leave my place and follow the lady with whom I came to Court, and who proposed our going away.

'As I did not frequent public places much, and my aunt, I thought, would not approve of my seeing Herminius often at home, we seldom met that year, and I was out of town the greatest part of the summer and the winter following. Towards the next spring I came to town and settled in a house by myself. I found Valeria in a very declining way, and my whole attention was given up to her and my unfortunate younger brother, on whose account I had been in distress some years. One night Valeria thought herself better, and insisted on my going to the opera. Herminius was there, and placed himself behind me. He told me he wondered where I had buried myself; he could neither see me at home nor abroad, and that he had been miserable to see me; that since his opportunities were so few he could no longer help declaring that he *had been in love with me for five years*, during which I had kept him in such awe that he had not courage to declare his love for me. I was in such confusion I knew not what I saw or heard for some time, but finding he was going on with the same subject I softly begged that he would not interrupt my attention to the opera, as if he had anything to say to me that was not the proper place. He then asked if I should be at home next day. I said I should.

'I cannot say I listened much to the music, and I had a secret satisfaction in thinking this affair would be explained some way or other, and free me from the anxiety

of uncertainty. The next day he came punctually, very much dressed, and in good spirits. I cannot recollect minutely our conversation. It began with common talk of news. Some marriage was named, and we both observed how little probability of happiness there was in most of the fashionable marriages where interest and not inclination was consulted. At last he said he was determined never to marry unless he was well assured of the affection of the person he married. My reply was, Can you have a stronger proof, if a person is at her own disposal, than her consenting to marry you? He replied that was not sufficient. I said he was unreasonable, upon which he started up, and said, "I find, madam, this is a point on which we shall never agree." He looked piqued and angry, made a low bow, and went away immediately, and left me in such confusion that I could hardly recollect what had past; nor can I to this hour—but from that time till he was married *we never met.*'

This account was written some ten years after the event, but in a letter to Anne, dated Christmas Day 1729, Mary gives a slight outline of the unfortunate ending of this romance. She begins in an unusually sober vein with the announcement that she has just returned from early service at St. James's Chapel, and continues, 'As friendship is next in degree to divine love, I don't know any way I can employ an hour or two so well as in dedicating of it to yourself who always inspire me with a reasonable transport, and improve all my sentiments. There is great satisfaction in endeavouring to do one's duty; it gives cheerfulness to the heart that nothing can equal, and there is something so superior in that pleasure that when anybody has once tasted the delights of a conscience void of offence, 'tis surprising they should ever neglect so great

an advantage. I am frequently led to this reflection by the disregard I too often meet with in conversation of religion. It is treated entirely as priestcraft, and people are so bewitched to their own loose way of thinking that they avoid all occasions of being convinced of the error. It grieves me to see the encouragement so frequently given to vice, and no opportunity is lost of ridiculing virtue. I am convinced a sincere and honest friendship cultivated betimes would secure people from those sad mistakes. How should I be laughed to scorn should this letter fall into the hands of the fashionable! I should be called "canter," and you would be despised for having such a correspondent. . . .

'Bas [Lord Baltimore] made me a visit on Monday. Saturday last I went to the opera. He was there, and sat behind me the first act, came again as soon as the opera was done, and led me to my chair; talked in the old strain of being unhappy, and that I was to answer for all his flights and extravagance. I told him that was so large a charge that I should be sorry to have it laid to my account. I nettled him, and he me. However, on Monday he came. When he came into the room I could not help wishing his mind answerable to his person, for I never saw him look so well. He sat down, and immediately asked me if I did not think they were miserable people that were strangers to love, but added, You are so great a philosopher that I dread your answer. I told him as for philosophy I did not pretend to it, but I endeavoured to make my life easy by living according to reason, and that my opinion of love was either that it made people very miserable or very happy. He said it made him miserable. "That, I suppose, my lord," said I, "proceeds from yourself. Perhaps you place it on a wrong foundation."

He looked confounded, I thought, turned the discourse, and went away immediately after. I must confess I could not behave myself with indifference, and I am sure he must perceive that what I had said affected me. I have been in no public place since, as I shall not care to meet him.'

To return to the autobiographical narrative. 'The vexation of mind I had laboured under for some time,' continues the writer, 'affected me to so great a degree that I fell ill of a fever the very day that Herminius made me that extraordinary visit. I was for some days in a great deal of danger. During my long confinement, he never once inquired after me. Before I was well my aunt died, whose death was a most sensible affliction to me. Sir John Stanley, whose tender friendship I must always acknowledge, seemed to double his regard for me on our mutual loss, and I endeavoured to pay him that respect and gratitude so justly his due. As soon as I was able to go abroad I went with him to his villa, Northend; but that so severely renewed my trouble, or rather added to it, that I was not able to bear it. I then proposed to a dear friend of mine, Silvia [Mrs. Donnellan], to take a lodging at Richmond, the pleasantest village within ten miles of London.

'She readily consented: we joined at the expense, and our situation at Richmond was as pleasant as it could be. Her good sense, her peculiar agreeable talent for conversation, our variety of works—reading, going on the water, seeing all the fine places in the neighbourhood—gave me a new turn of thinking, shook off the gloom, and restored me to health. But as my spirits had not quite recovered their usual vivacity, I readily complied with a proposal she made in her turn of going with her to Ireland

to see her friends—her sister being settled there in a very splendid and agreeable way. I had heard of Herminius's engagement, and almost as soon of his marriage. As his behaviour had given me some disquiet, I thought it best to avoid meeting him for some time; but a too great retirement from public places would have looked remarkable, which determined me to go to Ireland with my friend as soon as it was convenient for her to go, but *the real reason of my going was entirely locked within my breast.*'

The letters to Anne quickly recover their former cheerful and lively tone. Deeply affected as she had been by the cruel and heartless manner in which she had been treated, Mary determined to overcome her attachment to the man who had trifled with her feelings as soon as she was convinced that he was unworthy. In July of the same year, 1730, Lord Baltimore, whose affairs were said to be much involved, married Mary, the daughter of Sir Theodore Janssen, a rich merchant. Perhaps, after all, Mrs. Pendarves was fortunate in escaping from a man whom George II. described as 'my Lord Baltimore, who thinks he understands everything, and understands nothing, who wants to be well with both courts, and is well at neither; and, *entre nous*, is a little mad.'

In the letters written between the final parting with Lord Baltimore and the start for Ireland in September 1730, we hear much less than usual of operas, dances, and other festivities; but there are one or two interesting allusions to John Wesley, to Hogarth the painter, and to the literature with which Mrs. Pendarves was endeavouring to distract her mind. In one letter she explains her use of 'hard terms' by the fact that she has lately conversed, by the help of the inimitable Fontenelle,

with the planets. 'Nothing,' she declares, 'ever was so delightfully entertaining, as well as instructive, as the Plurality of Worlds. What a charming place is the moon! But although I have formed a very advantageous idea of that planet, I shall not envy its inhabitants when I am with my own star—that presides over all my actions and influences me to virtue.'

A letter, or rather a sermon in letter form, from John Wesley to Mrs. Granville is included in the collection. Wesley at this time was only eight-and-twenty, and was not to begin his field-preaching until about seven years later; but he had already adopted the peculiar phraseology of Methodism, and certainly was not averse from preaching on paper. For a period of four years he had corresponded with Mrs. Pendarves and Anne Granville under the name of Cyrus, Mary's pseudonym being Aspasia and Anne's Selina. The letters seem to be merely the medium for a mild kind of religious flirtation, and it is hard indeed to believe that those signed Aspasia really were written by the sprightly Mrs. Pendarves, though no doubt she was versatile enough to be able to suit her own style to that of her correspondent. On one occasion she asks Cyrus whether he considers she would be wrong to go to a concert of music on a Sunday evening. He replies, like an augur of old, 'To judge whether any action be lawful on the Sabbath or no, we are to consider whether it advances the end for which the Sabbath was ordained. What therefore tends to advance this end is lawful on this day. What does not tend to advance this end is not lawful on this day.'

Later, he complains that he has been accused of being too strict, and of laying burdens on himself and others that are too heavy to be borne. Aspasia replies: 'The

imputation thrown on you is a most extraordinary one. But such is the temper of the world, when you have no vice to feed their spleen with, they will condemn the highest virtue. O Cyrus, how noble a defence you make! and how you are adorned with the beauty of holiness! How ardently do I wish to be as resigned and humble as yourself!' After this it is small wonder that there was more of sentiment than of religion in some of Cyrus's effusions, as, for instance, when he exclaims: 'Should one who was as my own soul be torn from me, it would be best for me. Surely if you were called first, mine eyes ought not to overflow because all tears were wiped away from yours! But I much doubt whether self-love would not be found too strong for a friendship which even now I find to be less disinterested than I hitherto imagined. . . . Tell me, Aspasia—tell me, Selina—if it be a fault that my heart burns within me when I reflect on the many marks of favour you have already shown?'

John Wesley's biographer, Mr. Tyerman, evidently thinks that if Mrs. Pendarves had not gone to Ireland just at this time she might have married the leader of Methodism instead of becoming the wife of the Dean of Down. But the bustle of the journey and the complete change of scene put poor Cyrus out of her head. She tells 'Selina' that she has really no time to write to him, and only after all intercourse has ceased reproaches herself somewhat perfunctorily for having neglected 'so extraordinary a correspondent.'

Another Mr. Wesley often alluded to at this time was Richard Colley, who, having succeeded in 1728 to the family estates, assumed the surname and arms of Wesley. He was created Baron Mornington in 1746, and his

eldest son, Garrett, Mrs. Delany's godson, who was created Viscount Wellesley of Dangan, and Earl of Mornington, was the father of the great Duke of Wellington.

'Last Friday,' writes Mrs. Pendarves, in the summer of 1731, 'I dined at Mr. Wesley's. After dinner I came home to settle accounts and order the packing of my box; when that was done I returned to the company. The young men, upon my going away, thought the company was dispersed, and walked off, but we were very merry without them. Mr. Percival, you know, can be very entertaining, and so can Mr. Wesley. We romped and played at little plays with the children till supper-time. I never met with so delightful a man as my hero Mr. Wesley—so much goodness, friendliness, and cheerfulness joined. Miss Wesley is the finest girl I ever saw; you would have been charmed had you seen her mimic the dancing of twenty people, I believe.'

In the same letter she writes: 'I am grown passionately fond of Hogarth's painting, there is more *sense* in it than any I have seen. I believe I wrote you word that Mr. Wesley's family are drawn by him, and Mrs. Donnellan with them. I have had the pleasure of seeing him paint the greater part of it. He has altered his manner of painting since you saw his pictures; he finishes more a good deal. I have released Lady Sunderland from her promise of giving me her picture by Zincke, to have it done by Hogarth. I think he takes a much greater likeness, and that is what I shall value my friend's picture for, more than the excellence of the painting. Hogarth has promised to give me some instructions about drawing that will be of great use—some rules of his own that he says will improve me more in a day than a year's learning in the common way.'

Although one lover had proved faithless, we hear of others no less eligible who are more in earnest. In May 1731, Mary writes to her sister: 'Your account of Puzzle [the nickname of a rejected lover] savours of madness. I am glad his fortune is so good; 'tis a very handsome maintenance for a single man. I think he has a good deal of merit, and I protest solemnly I am extremely sorry to give him any pain; and had I any inclination to marry, and a fortune double what I have, I would prefer him to any man I know; but to let you know seriously that money without worth cannot tempt me, I have refused my Lord Tyrconnel. Lady Carteret asked me the other day if I would give her leave to proceed in it, that she thought I should be very blameworthy to refuse so vast a fortune, a title, and a good-natured man. All that, I told her, was no temptation to me; he had the character, very justly, of being silly, and I would not tie myself to such a companion for an empire. She said I was in the wrong. . . .

'You have reason to dread the condition of an old maiden. Don't run the hazard of it; depend upon it all your resolutions will fail you when you come to that peevish condition; therefore, secure yourself. I will give you a helping hand if in my power.'

A few weeks later Mrs. Pendarves had rather a curious encounter with her would-be suitor. 'I mentioned my dining on Monday last at Mrs. Percival's,' she writes. 'There was Capel Moore and Lady Mary, his wife. She seems to be a good sort of woman, without any airs or liveliness; he was a little cogitabund or grave (for to tell you the truth I do not well understand the meaning of that hard word) till after dinner. He asked after you. I reproached him with not meeting you, and making you

laugh, as you appointed him to do at the ridotto. After drinking tea Capel proposed going on the water. We accepted the offer, took up Mr. Wesley in our way, drove to Whitehall Stairs, took the boat we liked best, and rowed away very pleasantly—the water smooth, the sky serene, the company good-humoured. Philomel [another name for Mrs. Donnellan] was soon called upon to make use of her sweet pipe, which she did. A boat with two ladies and one gentleman was immediately attracted, and pursued us. As soon as they were near enough for us to see their faces, who should be beheld but the Duchess of Ancaster, an old woman with her, and my *Lord Tyrconnel.* I was not a little diverted at this interview, but much more so when he opened his wise mouth, and told Mrs. Donnellan hers was the finest water language he ever heard, nay, the finest language he had ever heard by land or water, and many more polite speeches. They were in an open boat, ours was covered. It would have diverted you to see how the wretch peeped to look at us, which was no easy matter. My companion's voice charmed them so much that they did not quit us till she had sung several songs. Capel asked the duchess to sing, which she, in a droll way, did very readily. At last they agreed to sing a duetto out of the *Beggars' Opera,* but such caterwauling was never heard, and we all laughed.

'As we were returning home, and had parted with our gallant company, they discovered water in the bottom of the boat; my feet were soaked quite through up to my ankles, and my petticoats above half a yard sopped in water. We began to think it was no joke, and ordered the boatman to put in at the first stair. We landed at a little island, where was one solitary house; we knocked

at the door, and a clever-shaped young woman, dressed in a white calico nightgown, with some difficulty admitted us. We endeavoured to get another boat, none could be had, so they mended up our crazy vessel and we ventured. We arrived safe and sound at Whitehall Stairs at eleven o' the clock.'

Mrs. Pendarves's project of a visit to Dublin, where she and Mrs. Donnellan were invited to stay with the latter's sister, Mrs. Clayton, wife of the Bishop of Killala, was a great undertaking in those days, and met with some opposition from her family, but she held to her intention, and in July 1731 we find her writing: 'I pick up by degrees the things I shall want for my Irish expedition. I have bought a gown and petticoat; 'tis a very fine blue satin, sprigged all over with white, and the petticoat facings and endings broidered in the manner of a trimming wove in the silk. This suit of clothes cost me sixteen pounds; and yesterday I bought a pink damask for seven shillings a yard, the prettiest colour I have ever seen for a nightgown.'

In September the party set out, and on the 10th Mary writes from Chester: 'Here we are weatherbound; what can I do so agreeable as write to my dearest sister. The weather hitherto has been contrary to us, and we are so cautious that we will not venture till it is more settled. We have several of our acquaintance here waiting for a passage also. Mr. Dubourg and his wife, with our charming Philomel, whose conversation, you know, is not inferior to her voice. Our spiritual guide takes abundance of care of us, and by way of variety we have a pretty butterfly man now and then. . . . We amuse ourselves with working, reading, and walking, and in the evening play pool or picket.

We have secured places in the *Pretty Betty*. The best cabin Mrs. Donnellan and I have taken, and are to pay five guineas.'

The letter describing the voyage has apparently been lost, but on September 22nd, Mrs. Pendarves writes from Dublin: 'I hope by this time my dearest sister has no more fears for me. My mama has received my letter with an account of my voyage. I must do justice to the good people I am living with, and give you a notion of our ways. The Bishop of Killala and his lady, you know, are agreeable, and never so much so as in their own house, which is indeed magnifique, and they have a heart answerable to their fortune. They received me with real joy, which does not seem to allay by our being longer together. The first day we came we were denied to all but particular friends. You were much inquired after, and heartily wished for. Alas! did I not join in that wish? Sunday we went to church, and saw all company that came, which was numerous, for Mrs. Clayton is extremely liked, and visited by everybody. Yesterday we were at the same sport, and this morning we are to go to the Duchess of Dorset's to pay our court. So much for our company, now for our habitation. Stephen's Green is the name of the square where this house stands; the front of it is like Devonshire House. The apartments are handsome, and furnished with gold-coloured damask, virtues, busts and pictures that the bishop brought with him from Italy. A universal cheerfulness reigns in the house. They keep a very handsome table, six dishes of meat at dinner, and six plates at supper.'

Mrs. Pendarves went to Ireland, intending to stay six months, and ended by staying eighteen. She seems thoroughly to have appreciated the easy hospitality and

informal gaiety of Dublin society, and she made many new friends, among them Dean Swift, with whom she kept up a correspondence. It was on this visit that she first learnt to know and respect Dr. Delany, whom she afterwards married. 'The character he bore in the world,' she says in her autobiography, 'made me wish to be acquainted with him. He was then married, lived in a very agreeable manner, and reserved one day in the week for his particular friends, among whom were those of the best learning and genius in the kingdom. I thought myself honoured by being admitted to such a set, and Silvia and I never failed of making use of a privilege so agreeable to both of us. By this means I grew intimate with Dessario [Dr. Delany], and had an opportunity of observing his many excellent qualities. His wit and learning were to me his meanest praise; the excellence of his heart, his humanity, benevolence, charity, and generosity, his tenderness, affection, and friendly zeal gave me a higher opinion of him than any other man I had ever conversed with, and made me take every opportunity of conversing and corresponding with one from whom I expected so much improvement.'

A few extracts from the letters written from Ireland will give some idea of the social life in Dublin and the provinces at that period:

'Dublin, *Sept.* 26, 1731.

'Last Tuesday morning I was at the Castle, and we went again in the evening. The apartment consists of three rooms, not altogether so large as those at St. James's, but of a very tolerable size. In the furthest room there is placed a basset table, at which the Duchess of Dorset sits down when she has received and made her compliments to the company. It is very seldom any

ladies sit down to basset, but quadrille parties are made in the other rooms, and such idle ones as I saunter up and down, or pick up some acquaintance to chat with, just the same as at St. James's. There were several very pretty women: the top beauty is Lady Ross, a sweet, agreeable creature. . . . As for the generality of people that I meet here, they are much the same as in England —a mixture of good and bad. There is a heartiness among them that is more like Cornwall than any I have known, and great sociableness.'

'*Oct. 4th.*

'The chief entertainment of this week was the review on Friday. The park, justly called the Phœnix Park, was the place of show. One regiment of horse and three of foot, who all performed their parts well. The Duchess of Dorset was there in great state, and all the *beau monde* of Dublin. But I must not pass over in silence the beauties of the park, which is a very large piece of ground, very fine turf, agreeable prospects, and a delightful wood; indeed, I never saw a spot of ground more to my taste—it is far beyond St. James's or Hyde Park. Nobody's equipage outlooked ours except my Lord Lieutenant's, but in every respect I must say Mrs. Clayton outshines her neighbours, not that that is easily done here, for people understand not only living well but easily.'

'*October 9th.*

'I must say the environs of Dublin are delightful. The town is bad enough, narrow streets and dirty-looking houses, but some good ones scattered about; and, as for St. Stephen's Green, I think it may be preferred justly to any square in London, and it is a great deal larger than Lincoln's Inn Fields. Yesterday, being the anniversary

of the king's coronation, we, like loyal subjects, went to the Castle. There was a ball, very decently ordered, and French dances in abundance. I danced three country dances with Mr. Usher in a vast crowd; after that we were summoned to supper, where everything was prepared with great magnificence. I have just begun an acquaintance *among the wits*—Mrs. Grierson, Mrs. Sycon, and Mrs. Pilkington; the latter is a friend of Dean Swift's, and I hope among them I shall be able to pick up some entertainment for you.'

Of the three ladies here mentioned, the first, Mrs. Grierson, was allowed to be an excellent scholar, not only in Greek and Roman literature, but also in history, divinity, philosophy, and mathematics. She edited editions of Tacitus and Terence, and wrote several English poems that were much admired in their day. Mrs. Pilkington seems to have been a wit rather than a scholar. She was a *protégée* of Swift's, who gave her husband letters of introduction to Pope, Bolingbroke, and others of his most distinguished London friends. But the Pilkington pair turned out ill, and brought little credit upon their patron. Mrs. Sycon was the original of the 'Psyche,' to whom Swift wrote the verses beginning:

> 'At two afternoon, for our Psyche inquire,
> Her tea-kettle's on, and her smock's at the fire:
> So loitering, so active, so busy, so idle,
> Which has she most need of, a spur or a bridle?'

Perhaps this acquaintance with the learned ladies is responsible for the somewhat acrid tone of the following extract: 'Would it were so, that I went ravaging and slaying all odious men, as that would go near to clear the world of that sort of animal; you know I never had

a good opinion of them, and every day my *dislike strengthens*; some few I will except, but *very few*, they have so despicable an opinion of women, and treat them by their words and acts so ungenerously and inhumanly. By my manner of inveighing, anybody less acquainted with me than yourself would imagine I had *very lately* received some very ill usage. No! 'tis my general observation on conversing with them: the minutest indiscretion in a woman (though occasioned by themselves) never fails of being enlarged into a notorious crime; but men are to sin on without limitation or blame; a hard case,—not the restraint we are under, for that I extremely approve of, but the unreasonable licence tolerated in the men.'

Mrs. Pendarves gives an amusing description of one of her partners at a ball, a gentleman who would certainly have delighted the heart of Thackeray. After mentioning three or four of the company, she proceeds: 'The rest of the men are not worth naming, poor, dull wretches, very ill-chosen, I am sure. I wanted my good partner, Mr. Usher; in his stead I had Captain Folliot, a man six foot odd inches high, black, awkward, romping, and roaring. I thought he would have shook my arms off and crushed my toes to atoms; every moment he did something awkward, and as often asked "my ladyship's pardon." In the midst of his furious dancing, when he was throwing his arms about him outrageously, snap went something that we all thought had been the main bone of his leg, but it proved only a bone of his toe. Notwithstanding which he fought upon his stumps, and would not spare me one dance; we began pegging it at eight, and continued our sport till one without ceasing.'

'*March 7th*, 1732.

'Tis fit in return for the account you give me of your amusements that I let you know what we do here. Why, on the first of March we went to Court in the morning, heard a song of Dubourg's, and after that compliment was over refreshed ourselves by dinner, and went again at seven. The ball was in the old beef-eaters' hall, a room that holds seven hundred people seated; it was well it did, for never did I behold a greater crowd. At eleven the minuets were finished, and the duchess went to the basset table. After an hour's playing the duke, duchess, and nobility marched into the supper room, which was the council chamber. In the midst of the room was placed a holly-tree, illuminated by an hundred wax tapers; round it was placed all sorts of meats, fruit, and sweetmeats. Servants waited next, and were encompassed round by a table, to which the company came by turns to take what they wanted. When the doors were first opened, the hurly-burly is not to be described; squealing, shrieking, all sorts of noises, some ladies lost their lappets, others were trod upon. Poor Lady Santry almost lost her breath in the struggle, and fanned herself for two hours before she could recover herself enough to know if she were alive or dead. I and my company were more discreet than to go with the torrent: we staid till people had satisfied their curiosity and hunger, and then took a quiet view of the *famous tree*, which occasioned more rout than it was worth.'

In May the bishop's household removed to Killala for the summer, and the letters describe the journey thither, and the mode of life in rural Ireland. The first stopping-place was Dangan, distant twenty miles from

Dublin, the house of Mr. Wesley, and from thence Mrs. Pendarves writes:—

'*May 27th*, 1732.

'We got to our journey's end about eight o'clock, and were received with a hearty welcome. The house is very large, handsome, and convenient; the situation is not pleasant, the country being flat. Mr. Wesley is making great improvements of planting trees and making canals. You know the good people so well that belong to this place that there is no occasion to say how agreeable they make their house. The sweet little girls remember you and all your pretty ways. We live magnificently, and at the same time without ceremony. There is a charming large hall with an organ and harpsichord, where all the company meet when they have a mind to be together, and where music, draughts, dancing, shuttlecock, and prayers take their turn. Our hours for eating are ten, three, and ten again. I hope my dear sister will endeavour to make herself and my mama easy at my staying so much longer in Ireland, for I never had my health better in my life. Sir John Stanley has been told I am going to be married: I easily guessed the party though he did not name him. It is very likely the same report may meet your ears, therefore I give you notice that it is altogether groundless.'

The next stopping-place seems to have been Newton Gore, where the whole party went fishing, and had a picnic meal under the trees. 'We staid on the water till eight,' writes Mary, 'then went to a cabin, which is such a thing as this thatched [a sketch is inserted]. It belongs to a gentleman of fifteen hundred pounds a year, who spends most of his time and fortune in this place. The situation is pretty,

but the house is *worse* than I have represented. He keeps a man-cook, and has given entertainments of twenty dishes of meat! The people of this country don't seem solicitous of having good dwellings, or more furniture than is absolutely necessary—hardly so much—but they make it up in eating and drinking. I have not seen less than fourteen dishes of meat for dinner, and seven for supper during my peregrinations; and they not only treat us at their houses magnificently, but, if we are to go to an inn, they provide us with a basket crammed with good things. No people can be more hospitable and obliging, and there is not only great abundance, but great order and neatness. . . . The country of Ireland has no fault but want of inhabitants to cultivate it. The mountains and noble lochs make a fine variety, but they cut down all their woods instead of preserving them. The roads are much better in Ireland than in England, mostly causeways, a little jumbling, but *very safe*. . . . The poverty of the people as I have passed through the country has made *my heart ache*. I never saw greater appearance of *misery*: they live in great extremes, either profusely or wretchedly.'

By June 21st the party has arrived at Killala, 'a very pretty spot of ground; the house old and indifferent enough: the sea so near us that we can see it out of our windows; the garden, which is laid out entirely for our use, is pretty, with a great many shady walks and forest trees. . . . Last Sunday the bishop gave us a very good sermon. Perhaps you think our cathedral a vulgar one, and that we have an organ and choir; no, *we* have no such popish doings—a good parish minister and *bawling* of psalms is our method of proceeding. The church is neat, but you would not *dream* it was a cathedral. . . .

We rise at eight, meet together at breakfast at ten, after that sit down to work. Phil holds forth. "Zaide" entertains us at present in French (*Histoire Espagnole* by M. de Segrais), 'tis a pretty romance. How I love Belasine, Alphonzo's mistress, and pity him, though his folly wrought his destruction. We dine at three, set to work again between five and six, walk out at eight, and come home time enough to sit down to supper by ten. Very pretty chat goes round till eleven, then prayers, and so to bed.'

'KILLALA, *August 13th.*

'The fair of Killala has added largely to our library—*Paresmus and Parismenos* (by Thomas Creed), the *Seven Champions, Valentine and Orson*, and various other delectable histories. . . . We had excellent sport at the fair. About eleven o'clock Mrs. Clayton, well attended, in her coach drawn by six flouncing Flanders mares, went on the strand. Six heats the first race; the second gave us much more sport; five horses put in, the last horse to win, and every man rode his neighbour's horse, without saddle, whip, or spur. Such holloing, kicking of legs, sprawling of arms could not be seen without laughing *immoderately*. In the afternoon chairs were placed before the house, where we all took our places in great state, all attired in our best apparel; then dancing, singing, grinning, accompanied with an excellent bagpipe, the whole concluded with a ball, bonfire, and illumination. Pray does your bishop promote such entertainments at Gloster as ours does at Killala?'

CHAPTER V

(1732-1734)

KILLALA was quitted in October, and a leisurely tour was made back to Dublin. There is a gap of two months in the correspondence, but in an unpublished letter, dated January 13th, 1733, occurs an allusion to Dr. Delany which is curious when considered by the light of after-events. 'What do you mean by Mr. Clapton and false fire?' demands Mrs. Pendarves. 'You never mentioned him before to me. What was he, a lover of yours? I fancy not, for you seem to mention his being departed in a very cool manner. Mr. Y—— has more sense than to expect more favour from me than he has already found; I have no objection to his acquaintance or friendship, but I never can or will go further, and if he does not think it worth his while to converse with me on that footing he may go hang himself. . . . Upon my word I think the spirit of gallantry has taken its residence in and about Gloster. The order of the stocking or hose, though, I think does not sound so polite as the order of the garter. Think of some prettier name to give it. . . . Last Sunday I went to hear Doctor Delany preach, and was extremely pleased with him. His sermon was on the duties of wives to husbands, a subject of no great use to me at present. He has an easy, pathetical manner of preaching that pleases me mightily.'

About the same time occur the first personal allusions to Swift, with whom Mrs. Pendarves had struck up a friendship, or more accurately, perhaps, an intellectual flirtation such as the great man loved. On January 24th, she writes: 'On Tuesday Phill and I dined at Dr. Delany's; there we met Miss Kelly, Lord Orrery, the Dean of St. Patrick's, etc. Swift is a very *odd companion* (if that expression is not too familiar for so great a genius); he talks a great deal, and does not require many answers; he has infinite spirits, and says abundance of good things in his common way of discourse. Miss Kelly's beauty and good humour have gained an entire conquest over time, and I come in only a little by the by.'

On February 6th, in another unpublished letter she continues: 'I have done some very pretty things since I last spoke my mind to you. On Wednesday last expired the handsomest, agreeablest, best ordered assembly that ever delighted the heart of beau or belle. It made its exit with great honour, and was attended by persons of the first rank, men of wit, and ladies of beauty. Sighs and lamentations were not omitted, and I believe some tears it cost. Like other things of value its worth was not known till it breathed its last, and then its very enemies confessed it was the most perfect thing of the kind, and Mrs. Clayton has gained great honour by her behaviour in her drawing-room, which was as proper as could be. We were engaged on Thursday to go to Mrs. Palliser's, a lady much in request in Dublin, sister to the beauty, Miss Pennyfeather. We went at seven o'clock. The design was to have one table at whist and another of commerce, but the young people (among whom, though unworthy, was placed your humble servant) thought dancing a more lively entertainment. . . . We were eight

couple. Sir Thomas Pendergast and I began the ball. We began at eight o'clock, and danced briskly till eleven, then went to supper, began again at one, and ended at three. . . .

'I forgot to tell you that we dined last Thursday at Doctor Delany's, where we met the Dean of St. Patrick's. Miss Kelly was there, who is a great favourite of his; and I am aiming a little at his favour, without great hopes of success, for his smiles are not common. We are to dine again at Dr. Delany's on Thursday next, which is the day the Dean of St. Patrick's always spends there; my Lord Orrery is to be of the party. . . . On Sunday we had a violent storm of wind, but were obliged to go abroad to a christening, where we were pretty merry. The Wesleys were there. Have you not read the poem on Riches, and do you not think that the Man of Ross suits Mr. Wesley, my hero? I believe that you that do not know him as well as I do will find some resemblance, but I that have been in the way of hearing of all his generous actions think the character points him out. I have made acquaintance with men in Ireland that I should be heartily glad to improve and cultivate a friendship with had I an opportunity, but in all likelihood we may never meet again. The Dean of St. Patrick's, whose wit you are well read in, and whose conversation is entertaining and delightful. Doctor Delany is as agreeable a companion as ever I met with, and one who condescends to converse with women, and treat them like reasonable creatures. Mr. Wesley you know, and my opinion of him. These are the sort of men I find myself inclined to like, and wish I had such a set in England.

'Last night Miss Kelly, Donnellan, and I went to a play-house, the first night of their acting. They opened

poor thing, for she is confined to her
disorder, but the Dean attends at h
must be old and tough indeed if tha
But Dr. Delany will make a *more de*
has all the qualities requisite for frie
ness, and application; I believe you
cause he is worthy. . . . The Dean
writing a poem on poetry. Dr. Del
done of it; he says 'tis like himself,
hopes of seeing it yet awhile. Mr
undertaken to lash the age; I belie
before they are reformed. He says h
friend nor foe, so declaring oneself fo
us from a stroke.'

'The day before we came out of
Dr. Delany's, and met the usual comp
St. Patrick's was there in *very good*
himself "*my master*," and corrects me
English, or do not pronounce my w
wish he lived in England; I should nc
deal of entertainment from him, but ir

maker. In the autobiography she relates how, 'A little before I made my visit to Ireland, young Tomasio [Lord Weymouth] returned from his travels, being just of age. He was son to Laura by her first husband, and heir to great honours and a vast estate. I had been so used to him from his infancy in Alcander's family that I looked upon him as my younger brother. He was always very fond of me, and being ten years younger than myself, I used to give him advice upon all occasions, and he had an entire confidence in me. We corresponded when he was in France, and I often told him he must let me choose him a wife, which he said I should. He had been married in his minority to Lady Elizabeth Sackville, daughter of the Duke of Dorset, but she died before his return from his travels, so they never lived together.

'Laura's indiscretion and Alcander's indolence made me fear they would not have a proper attention to him, and if they had I know they had no power over him. He was easily led by those he was fond of, but jealous and obstinate when he thought any authority was usurped. His behaviour towards me was very obliging, and I was so far from losing his favour by any advice I took the liberty of giving him, that at last I began to fear I had gained it too far. I was not only related to the Baron [Lord Carteret], but I had a particular intimacy with the family, and with the Baron's daughters, who, though much younger than me, were very fond of me, and I loved them all very well, especially the second daughter [Louisa Carteret]. As soon as I could judge of her disposition, I wished that Tomasio might like her as well as I did. She was very sensible, discreet, of a complying temper, gentle, mild, and withal very lively. Tomasio was good-natured and affectionate, liberal without distinc-

tion, warm in his temper, could not bear contradiction, and had not discernment enough to be reasoned with. This sort of disposition was hard to deal with, and required all those qualities Louisa possessed in a high degree. Her fortune was small, but she had been bred up in magnificence, and knew how to spend a large one gracefully, and manage it prudently. His fortune was very large, but his good nature and want of resolution turned his natural generosity into profuseness.

'This encouraged me to lay a train towards making him propose to her, by commending her on all occasions, and telling him everything I thought might prejudice him in her favour; and he would often say, "Why do you commend her so much?" and he did not know if he did marry why he should not choose me, for that he liked me better than anybody. He said this in so blunt a manner that it passed with me for a joke, till he repeated it so often that I thought it time to let him see that I had no view of engaging him for myself, and then without disguise mentioned Louisa as the person in the world I thought best fitted to make him happy. He did not relish this proposal, and gave me no other answer but that he must return to France before he settled, but that he liked Louisa the best of the sisters.

'While I was in Ireland it was reported and put in the news that Tomasio had returned to England, and was going to marry Louisa. I wrote to him immediately to express my great joy at an alliance I had so much wished for, and at the same time to the Baroness to know the truth of the report, and she informed me there was nothing in it. This was just before I left Ireland. I found, on my coming to England, Tomasio was living like a fine gentleman of the times. I was much grieved

about it, because if it continued he must be ruined in every way. He was very glad to see me, as obliging as usual, and pressed me extremely to make him a visit in the country. I told him I was very ready to do it when he had company there that was fit for me to keep. He looked confused, and asked me what I meant; upon which I told him what I heard, and freely blamed his conduct, and told him he could not be a happy man, nor make a figure suitable to his birth and fortune till he married some one equal to him in rank and condition; that he had a great deal of choice before him, and could not fail if he would consult his reason and judgment. He looked grave and thoughtful for some time, and then said, "I know what you wish; I received your letter from Ireland," and left me abruptly.

'A few days after he came to see me again, and said, "I can tell you a piece of news that will surprise you: Louisa is absolutely engaged—her father told me so this morning." I was extremely surprised, having had the night before a great deal of conversation with the Baroness, who engaged me as much as possible to promote this match with Tomasio, and I thought it strange the Baron should not have acquainted her with this engagement. He laughed at my surprise, and told me she was engaged, it was true, but it was to him. I was much pleased with the step he had taken, and congratulated him on his prudent choice. The Baron and Baroness were in the highest joy on this occasion. Laura's indiscretion made it absolutely necessary it should be kept a secret. Laura liked Louisa very well, though she had an inveterate dislike to the rest of the family, but Alcander often wished it might be a match. So I was sworn to silence till writings and clothes were ready, and then

Tomasio went to his mother, and declared his intentions in form, and she seemingly approved of it, so all preparations, magnificent on both sides, went on.

'At my house the young people often met, and nothing could be more gentle, amiable, and engaging than Louisa's behaviour. She liked Tomasio very much, who was handsome, and, when he softened his manner, agreeable, though she was not quite satisfied with his behaviour, which I can't say had much of a lover in it, and often made me very uneasy; and, when I told him of it, he would turn it into some compliment to me, which vexed me, and prevented me saying as much as I should otherwise have done, and I was willing to think it an awkward bashfulness which he always had when not quite at his ease. But I knew his disposition so well, and Louisa's great merit, that when once she was his wife I was sure he would love and admire her.'

The majority of the letters for the year 1733 are addressed to Dean Swift. They are, it will be noted, more stilted and self-conscious in style than those that were only intended for the eye of sister Anne. Moreover, they are couched in the language of extravagant compliment which seems to have been considered the correct style for an intellectual correspondence between ladies and gentlemen during the first half of the eighteenth century. The following is the first letter addressed to Swift, and is dated

'London, *May 29th*, 1733.

'Sir,—You will find to your cost that a woman's pen, when encouraged, is as bad as a woman's tongue; blame yourself, not me; had I never known the pleasure of receiving a letter from you I should not have persecuted you now. I think (a little to justify this bold attack)

Mrs Delany

that I am obliged by all the rules of civility to give you an account of the letter you charged me with. I delivered it into my Lord Bathurst's hands, and he read it before me. . . . We talked of your vineyard: he seemed pleased with every subject that related to you, and I was very ready to indulge him that way. I did not forget to brag of your favours to me: if you intended I should keep the secret, I have spoiled all, for I have not an acquaintance of any worth that I have not told how happy I have been in your company. Everybody loves to be envied, and this is the only way I have of raising people's envy; I hope, sir, you will forgive me, and let me know if I have *behaved myself right*. . . .'

The next letters to the Dean are from Gloucester, where Mary was spending the summer with her mother and sister.

'May I say without offending you,' she writes on July 21st, 'that I was overjoyed at the honour you did me in answering my letter? And do not call me formal when I assure you that I think myself made happy by such a distinction. It was stupidity in me not to let you know where to address to me, but I do not repent of it; I have by that means tried your zeal, but I am afraid your good-breeding more than your inclination procured me that favour. I am resolved to be even with you for what you say about my writing, and will henceforward write to you as carelessly as I can; and, if it is not legible, thank yourself. I do not wonder at the envy of the ladies, when you are pleased to speak of me with some regard: I give them leave to exercise their malice on an occasion that does me so much honour. I protest I am not afraid of you, and would appear quite natural to you, in the hopes of your

rewarding my openness and sincerity by correcting what you disapprove of; and, since I have not now an opportunity of receiving your favours of pinching and beating, make me amends by *chiding* me for every word that is *false-spelt* and for my *bad English*. You see what you are like to suffer. If this promises you too much trouble do not give me so much encouragement in your next letter, for upon something in your last I have almost persuaded myself that, by your assistance and my own most earnest desire, I may in time become worthy of your care. Vanity stands at my elbow all this while, and animates me by a thousand agreeable promises: without her encouragement I should never have presumed to correspond with the Dean of St. Patrick's. You must not be angry with me for keeping her company, for I had very little acquaintance with her till I had received some marks of your favour. . . . I wish you could make your words good, and that I *was* a *sorceress*; I should then set all my charms to work to bring you to England, and should expect a general thanksgiving for employing my spells to so good a purpose. . . . My Lord Lansdowne is much at your service, laments the days that are past, and constantly drinks your health in champagne as clear as your thoughts and as sparkling as your wit. . . .

'I attended Lord and Lady Weymouth [the Tomasio and Louisa of the autobiography] down to Longleat, and left them with as much prospect of happiness as matrimony can give: they are pleased with one another at present, and I hope that will continue. My Lord and Lord Carteret are both satisfied with the disposal of their daughter in so advantageous a station. Common report wrongs my Lord Weymouth, for which reason, as I am his friend, I must tell you his good qualities. He has

honour and good-nature, and does not want for sense; he loves the country, and inclines a little too much to his stable and dog-kennel; he keeps a very hospitable, good house, and is always ready to relieve those in distress; his lady, Dr. Delany can give you a character of, and is what I believe you will approve. . . .'

'GLOUCESTER, *Oct. 24th*, 1733.

'I cannot imagine how my Lord Orrery came by my last letter to you. I believe my good genius conveyed it into his hand to make it of more consequence to you. If it had that effect, I wish this may meet with the same fortune. If I were writing to a common correspondent I should now make a fine flourish to excuse myself for not sooner answering the favour of your letter; but I must deal plainly with you, sir, and tell you (now, do not be angry) that the fear of tiring you stopped my hand. I value your correspondence so highly that I think of every way that may preserve it; and one is not to be too troublesome. Now, I cannot guess how you will take this last paragraph, but if it makes me appear affected or silly, I will endeavour not to offend in the same manner again. Some mortification of that kind is wanting to bring me to myself. Your ways of making compliments are dangerous snares, and I do not know how to guard against the pleasures they bring. To be remembered and regretted by you are pleasures of a very delicate kind; I have been told that unexpected good fortune is harder to bear than adversity.

'The cold weather, I suppose, has gathered together Dr. Delany's set. The next time you meet, may I beg the favour to make my compliments acceptable? I recollect no entertainment with so much pleasure as what I received from that company; it has made me lament very sincerely

the many hours in my life that I have lost in insignificant conversation.

'A few days before I had your last letter my sister and I made a visit to my Lord and Lady Bathurst at Cirencester. Oakley Wood joins to his park, and the grand avenue that goes from his house through the park and wood is five miles long, and the whole contains five thousand acres. Lord Bathurst[1] talks with great delight of the pleasure you once gave him by surprising him in his wood, and showed me the house where you lodged. It has been rebuilt, for the day you left it it fell to the ground; conscious of the honour it had received by entertaining so illustrious a stranger, it burst with pride! . . . All the *beau monde* flock to London to see her Royal Highness (the Princess Royal) disposed of; but I prefer my duty to my mother, and the conversation of a country girl (my sister) to all the pomp and splendour of a court. Is this virtue or is it stupidity? It is a little unreasonable of me to begin a fourth page, but it is a hard task to retire from the company one likes best.—I am, sir, your most obliged and faithful, humble servant,

'M. PENDARVES.'

Mary and her sister probably spent the greater part of this year together, for the long, regular letters to Anne at Gloucester do not begin again until December 1733. In this month Mary is staying at Longleat with the newly-married Lord and Lady Weymouth. In a letter dated February 16th, 1734, there is an account of the marriage of another daughter of Lady Carteret to John Spencer, brother of the Duke of Marlborough.

'They were married,' writes Mrs. Pendarves, 'between

[1] The first Earl, who was distinguished for his wit and learning.

eight and nine o' the clock at night. After they were married they played a pool of commerce, supped at ten, went to bed between twelve and one, and went to Windsor Lodge the next day at noon. . . . Everybody at the wedding was magnificent. Their clothes are now laid by for the royal wedding, which will be about three weeks hence. I have got my wedding garment ready; 'tis a brocaded lutestring, white ground, with great ramping flowers in shades of purples, reds, and greens. I gave thirteen shillings a yard; it looks better than it describes, and will make a show. I shall wear it with dark purple and gold ribbon, and a *black hood* for decency's sake.'

In a letter dated March 16th, 1734, there is a description of the royal wedding, or rather of the dresses that were worn. 'The Princess of Orange's dress was the prettiest thing that ever was seen—a *corps de robe*, that is, in plain English, a stiff-bodied gown. The eight peers' daughters that held up her train were in the same sort of dress—all white and silver—with great quantities of jewels in their hair, and long locks; some of them were very pretty and well-shaped—it is a most becoming dress. The princess wore a mantua and petticoat, white damask with the finest embroidery of rich embossed gold. On one side of her head she had a green diamond of vast size, the shape of a pear, and two pearls prodigiously large that were fastened to wires, and hung loose in her hair; on the other side small diamonds prettily disposed; her earrings, necklace, and bars to her stays all extravagantly fine, presents of the Prince of Orange to her. . . . We went at one to the drawing-room—such crowding, such finery I never saw; with great difficulty I made my curtsey, and the queen *commended my clothes.* We got home to dinner about five, and went to the ball at eight, were so squeezed

for half an hour that 'twas insupportable, but Lord Baltimore permitted us to go up into the gallery; he made way for us, and we were happily placed where we could see everything.'

In April Mrs. Pendarves confides to her sister a proposal of marriage that she had received, not it must be confessed of a very romantic kind. The gentleman, a middle-aged widower, named Prideaux, had paid her some attention the summer before, and on meeting him at tea at the house of a common friend, 'my mind,' she says, 'misgave me plaguely. I stayed about two hours; the man talked sensibly enough, described some part of his house, particularly his library, which is a very large one (I suppose what belonged to his father, Dr. Prideaux, who wrote the Connection between the Old and New Testament), talked of his pictures, his love of music, and is a sort of performer (upon the fiddle) I believe.' The result of this meeting was that the accommodating friend, a Mrs. Harris, called upon Mrs. Pendarves, and explained that she 'was desired by Mr. Prideaux to make known his circumstances to me, and to beg leave he might wait upon me. He is a widower, aged between forty and fifty; he has four sons that are at school, and are always to be kept abroad, and one daughter nine years old. His estate is between two and three thousand a year, twenty thousand pounds of which is unsettled, and to be at my disposal if I please. He lives for a constancy in the country; his character is that of an honest gentleman and a man of sense. Thus have I given you a true state of the case, with what advantages it may appear to you I know not, but it *did not tempt me*! The five children, without considering any other circumstance, determined me to say "No." I am afraid mama will think I was too

rash, but to tell you the truth, matrimony is so *little* to my disposition, that I was glad to lay hold of a reasonable excuse for not accepting the proposal, and I was as glad to find he had five children as some people would have been at hearing he had five thousand a year.'

In the same letter is an allusion to a little musical entertainment that Mrs. Pendarves had recently given to some dozen of her music-loving friends. Among the guests was the great Mr. Handel. 'I was never so well entertained at an opera,' she writes. 'Mr. Handel was in the best humour in the world, and played lessons and accompanied Strada and all the ladies that sung from seven o'clock until eleven. I gave them tea and coffee, and about half an hour after nine had a salver brought in of chocolate, mulled white wine, and biscuits. Everybody was easy and seemed pleased.'

It is about this time that we find the first mention in the letters of the Duchess of Portland, whose friendship with Mrs. Pendarves was just beginning, a friendship that was to remain close and unbroken for nearly half a century. Lady Margaret Cavendish Harley, the daughter and heiress of the second Lord Oxford, was married to the second Duke of Portland in 1734. As a child she had received the homage of Matthew Prior in the charming lines beginning:

> 'My noble, lovely, little Peggy,
> Let this, my First Epistle, beg ye,
> At dawn of morn and close of even,
> To lift your heart and hands to heaven.'

The young duchess was a woman of unusual culture, with a strong taste for art and natural science, and it was perhaps owing to the stimulus of her friendship that we find Mary working steadily at crayon-drawing, and, as

she herself phrased it, 'running wild after shells.' 'This morning,' she writes on June 7th, 1734, 'I have set my little collection of shells in nice order in my cabinet, and they look so beautiful that I must by some means enlarge my stock; the beauties of shells are as infinite as of flowers, and to consider how they are inhabited enlarges a field of wonder that leads one insensibly to the great Director and Author of these wonders. How surprising is it to observe the indifference, nay (more properly) *stupidity* of mankind, that seem to make no reflection as they live, are pleased with what they meet with because it has beautiful colours or an agreeable sound; there they stop and receive but little more pleasure from them than a horse or a dog. . . . I am delighted with your bee-flower, and have told my Lady Sunderland of it, who will search her garden library to find it out, and if it thrives with you, shall be very thankful for some of the seed. You think, madam, that I have no garden, perhaps, but that's a mistake. I have one as big as your parlour at Gloucester, and in it groweth damask roses, stocks, variegated and plain, pinks, phalaria, some dead and some alive, and honeysuckles that never blow. . . . I have sent you some books of music, a dormouse pattern, and a little musk and lavender water for mama.'

CHAPTER VI

(1734-1736)

In September 1734 Mrs. Pendarves writes a reproachful letter to Dean Swift, after a twelvemonth gap in their correspondence.

'I find,' she says, 'your correspondence is like the singing of the nightingale—no bird sings so sweetly, but the pleasure is quickly past; a month or two of harmony, and then we lose it till next spring. I wish your favours may as certainly return. I am at this moment not only deprived of your letters, but of all other means of inquiring after your health, your friends and my correspondents being dispersed to their summer quarters. The last letter I writ to you was from Gloucester, about a twelvemonth ago; after that I went to Longleat to my Lady Weymouth; came to town in January, where I have remained ever since, except a few weeks at Sir John Stanley's at Northend. . . . Mrs. Donnellan sometimes talks of making a winter's visit to Dublin, and has vanity enough to think you are one of those that will treat her kindly. Her loss will to me be irreparable, besides the mortification it will be to me to have her go to a place where I should so gladly accompany her. . . . After having forced myself into your company, it will be impertinent to make you a longer visit, and to destroy the intention of it, which was to assure you of my being, sir, your most faithful and obliged servant, M. Pendarves.'

This gentle reminder brought, a month later, the following long and interesting epistle from the repentant dean:

'When I received the honour and happiness of your last letter I was afflicted with a pair of disorders that usually seize me once a year—these are *giddiness* and *deafness*, which usually last a month; the first tormenting my body, and the other making me incapable of conversing. In this juncture your letter found me; but I *was* able to read, though not to hear; neither did I value my deafness for three days, because your letter was my constant entertainment during that time; after which I grew sensibly better, and I find myself well enough to acknowledge the great favour you have done me, but cannot guess your motive for so much goodness. I guess that *your* good genius accidentally meeting *mine* was prevailed on to solicit your pity. Or would you appear a constant nymph, when all my goddesses of much longer acquaintance have forsaken me, as it is reasonable they should. But the men are almost as bad as the ladies, and I cannot but think them in the right; for I cannot make shifts, lie rough, and be undone by starving in scanty lodgings, without horses, servants, and conveniences, as I used to do in London, with port wine, or perhaps porter ale, to save charges!

'You dare not pretend to say that your town equals ours in hospitable evenings, with your *deep* play, and no entertainment but a cup of chocolate, unless you have mended your manners. I will not declare your reasons for not taking a trip over hither, because you have offered none but your royal will and pleasure; but if I were in the case of your friends here, with more life before me, and better health, I would solicit an Act of Parliament to

prevent your coming among us; or, at least, to make it high treason if you ever leave us. In the meantime, I wish you were forced over here by debts or want, because we would gladly agree to a contribution for life, dinners and suppers excluded, that are to go for nothing. I speak for the public good of this country, because a pernicious heresy prevails here among the men that it is the duty of your sex to be fools in every article except what is merely domestic, and to do the ladies justice there are very few of them without a good share of that heresy, except upon one article, that they have *as little regard for family business* as for the *improvement of their minds.*

'I have had for some time a design to write against this heresy, but have now laid these thoughts aside, for fear of making both sexes my enemies; however, if you will come over to my assistance, I will carry you about among our adversaries, and dare them to produce *one instance* where your *want of ignorance* makes you affected, pretending, conceited, disdainful, endeavouring to speak like a scholar, with twenty more faults objected by themselves, their lovers, or their husbands. But I fear your case is desperate, for I know you never laugh at a jest before you understand it; and I much question whether you *understand a fan*, or have so good a fancy at *silks* as others; and your way of spelling would not be intelligible. Therefore, upon your arrival hither, I will give you licence to be as silly as you can possible afford, one half hour every week, to the heretics of each sex, to atone for which you are to keep one fasting day at Dr. Delany's, and one at the Deanery. . . .

'Nothing vexes me so much with relation to you as that with all my disposition to find faults, I was never once able to fix upon anything that I could find amiss

although I watched you narrowly; for when I found we were to lose you soon, I kept my eyes and ears always upon you, in the hopes that you would make some *boutade.* That is, you know, a French word, and signifies a sudden jerk from a horse's hinder feet which you did not expect, because you thought him for some months a sober animal, and this hath been my case with several ladies I chose for friends; in a week, a month, or a year, hardly one of them failed to give me a *boutade*; therefore, I command you will obey my orders in coming over hither for one whole year; after which, upon the first *boutade* you make I will give you my pass to be gone.

'Are you acquainted with the Duke of Chandos? I know your cozen Lansdowne and he were intimate friends. I have known the duke long and well, and thought I had a share in his common favour, but he hath lately given me great cause of complaint. I was pressed by many persons of learning here to write to his Grace, that having some old records relating to this kingdom, which were taken from hence by the Earl of Clarendon, who was Lieutenant here, and purchased them from private owners, and are now in the duke's possession, that his grace would please to bestow them to the universities here, because Irish antiquities are of little value or curiosity to any other nation. I writ with all the civility in my power, and with compliments on the fame of his generosity, but he hath pleased to be silent above six weeks, which is the first treatment of that kind I ever met with from an English person of quality, and would better become a little Irish baron than a great English duke.

'If I have tired you, it is the effect of the great esteem I have for you; do but lessen your own merits, and I will shorten my letters in proportion. If you will come among

us, I engage that dreadful, old beggarly, western parson to residence; otherwise, we all resolve to send him over, which is, in our opinion, the surest way to drive you hither, for you will be in more haste to fly from him than to follow, *even* Mrs. Donnellan. . . .'

At this period Mrs. Pendarves was so much with her sister, who was out of health, that the family letters are few, and of no special interest, but the correspondence with Swift continues at intervals of a few months. In November 1734 she acknowledges the foregoing letter, and excuses herself for not having answered sooner on account of a disorder in one of her eyes. 'I wonder,' she continues, 'you should be at a loss for a reason for my writing to you; we all love honour and pleasure, and, were your letters dull, do you imagine my *vanity* would not be fond of corresponding with the Dean of St. Patrick's? But, the last reason you give I like best, and will stick by, which is that I am a more constant nymph than all your goddesses of much longer acquaintance, and, furthermore, I venture to promise, you are in no danger of receiving a *boutade*, if that depends on my will. As for those fasting days you talk of, they are, I confess, alluring baits, and I should certainly have been with you in three packets according to your commands, could I either *fly* or *swim*, but I am a heavy lump, destined for a few years to this earthly element; I cannot move about without the concurrent assistance of several animals that are very expensive.

'Now for business: as soon as I received your letter I wrote to my uncle Lansdowne, and spoke to him about the Duke of Chandos. He desired me to make his compliments to you, and to tell you he was very sorry he could be of no service to you in that affair, but he has had no manner of correspondence with the duke these fifteen

years. I have put it, however, into hands that will pursue it diligently, and, I hope, obtain for you what you desire; if they do not succeed, you must not call me negligent, for whatever lies in my power to serve you is of too much consequence for me to neglect. I have left my good friend and your humble servant Mrs. Donnellan behind me in London, where she meets with little entertainment suitable to her understanding; and she is a much fitter companion for the Dublin Thursday society than for the trifling company she is now engaged in. I wish you had her with you, as I cannot have her, because I know she would be happier than where she is, and my wish I think no bad one for you. . . .'

In February, 1735, the deaths of Lord and Lady Lansdowne occurred within a few days of each other. None of Mrs. Pendarves's letters concerning the loss of her favourite uncle appears to have been preserved, but the event made a considerable difference in the family fortunes, Mary's eldest brother, Bernard Granville, succeeding to Lord Lansdowne's property, though not to his title. An allusion to Lord Lansdowne's death occurs in the following letter from Swift, dated February 22nd, 1735:—

'MADAM,—I have observed among my own sex, and particularly in myself, that those of us who grow most insignificant expect most civility, and give less than they did when they were possibly good for something. I am grown sickly, weak, lean, forgetful, peevish, spiritless, and for those very reasons expect that you, who have nothing to do but to be happy, should be entertaining me with your letters and civilities, although I never return either. Your last is dated above two months ago, since which time I never had one hour of health or spirit to acknowledge it. *It is your fault*; why did you not come sooner

into the world, or let me come later? *It is your fault* for coming into Ireland at all; *it is your fault* for leaving it. I confess your case is hard, for if you return you are a great fool to come among *beggars and slaves*, if you do not return you are a *great knave* in forsaking those you have seduced to admire you.

'The complaint you make of a disorder in your eyes will admit of no raillery; it is what I was heartily afflicted to hear, but since you were able to write, I hope it hath entirely left you. I am often told that I am an ill judge of ladies' eyes, so I shall make you an ill compliment in confessing that I read in yours all the accomplishments I found in your mind and conversation, and happened to agree in my thoughts with better judges. I only wish they would never shine out of Dublin, for then you would recover the only temporal blessings this town affords—I mean sociable dinners and cheerful evenings, which, without your assistance, we shall certainly lose. For Dr. Delany lives entirely at Delville—the town air will not agree with his lady—and in winter there is no seeing him or dining with him but by those who keep coaches, and they must return the moment after dinner. Your false reasons for not coming hither are the same in one article for my not going among you, I mean the business of expense; but I can remove yours easily. It is but to stay with us always, and then you can live at least three times better than at home, where everything is thrice as dear, and your money twelve in the hundred better, whereas my sickness and years make it impossible for me to live at London. I must have three horses, as many servants, and a large house, neither can I live without constant wine, while my poor revenues are sinking every day.

'I am very sorry for the death of your cousin Lans-

downe; his son [*i.e.* son-in-law] Graham is ruining himself as fast as possible, but I hope the young lady has an untouchable settlement. I am very much obliged to your care about that business with the Duke of Chandos. I hear he told a person he would grant my request, but "that he had no acquaintance with me."

'Well, madam, pray God bless you wherever you go or reside. May you ever be as you are, agreeable to Killala curate and Dublin dean, for I disdain to mention temporal folk *without* gowns or cassocks. I will wish for your happiness, though I shall never see you, as Horace did for Galatea, when she was going a long voyage from home. Pray read the verses in the original:

> '"Sis licet felix ubicunque malis
> Et memor nostri Galatea vivas," etc.

A year or two ago I would have put the whole into English verse and applied it to you, but my rhyming is fled with my health, and what is more to be pitied, even my vein of satire on ladies is lost.'

In March, Anne Granville appears to be staying with her sister in town, and Mrs. Pendarves writes to her mother:

'My sister is very much mended by Dr. Hollins's prescriptions; she looks abundantly better, and is as lively as she used to be. . . . There is to be a magnificent masquerade at the Spanish Ambassador's after Lent; happy are those who can get tickets. I hope to get one for my sister, for it will be a show worth going to. To-night is Farinelli's benefit; all the polite world will flock there. I don't love mobbing, so I shall leave them to themselves. My sister gave you an account of Mr. Handel's playing here for three hours together; I did wish for you, for no entertainment in music could exceed it.'

There seems to have been some little difficulty about the settlement of Lord Lansdowne's affairs, for in May, 1735, Lady Granville[1] writes to Mrs. Pendarves, 'My son, my Lord Gower, and I have not the least intention to wrong your brother, but, on the contrary, to make him master of his estate without vexatious delays. I give you free leave to read this to Sir John Stanley and your brother, and afterwards, if I can't prevail, if we are not to go on in an amicable way, I shall think both the Knight and the Esq^re^ are of the family of the Wrongheads. When I am indifferent to people, I let them go their ways, but your brother I have had so much at heart to see happy that I would not have him take the contrary way to it.'

A few more extracts from the letters which passed between Mrs. Pendarves and Dr. Swift before the great man's brilliant intellect suffered a final eclipse may bring this chapter to a conclusion.

MRS. PENDARVES TO DR. SWIFT.

'*May* 16, 1735.

'You have never yet put it in my power to accuse you of want of civility, for since my acquaintance with you you have always paid me more than I expected; but I may sometimes tax you with want of kindness, which, to tell you the truth, I did for a month at least. At last I was informed your not writing to me was occasioned by your ill state of health; that changed my discontent, but did not lessen it, and I have not yet quite determined it in my mind, whether I would have you sick or

[1] Countess Granville was a daughter of the first Earl of Bath, mother of Lord Carteret, and great-aunt of Mrs. Delany. She and her sister, Lady Jane Leveson Gower, were co-heiresses of their nephew, the third Earl of Bath.

negligent of me; they are both great evils and hard to choose out of — I heartily wish neither may happen. You call yourself by a great many ill names, which I take ill, for I never could bear to hear a person I value abused; I much easier forgive your calling me knave and fool. . . .

'I believe you have had a quiet winter in Dublin; not so has it been with us in London; hurry, wrangling, extravagance, and matrimony have reigned with great impetuosity. Our operas have given much cause of dissension; men and women have been deeply engaged, and no debate in the House of Commons has been urged with more warmth. The dispute of the merits of the composers and singers is carried to so great a height that it is much feared by all true lovers of music that operas will be quite overturned. I own I think we make a very silly figure about it. I am much obliged to you for the two Latin lines in your last letter; it gave me a fair pretence of showing the letter to have them explained, and I have gained no small honour by that. . . .'

'BATH, *Jan.* 7, 1736.

'I am told you have some thoughts of coming here in the spring. I do not think it proper to tell you how well pleased I am with that faint prospect. I write in all haste to know if you really have any such design, for if you have, I shall order my affairs accordingly, that I may be able to meet you here. The good old custom of wishing a happy new year to one's friends is now exploded among our refined people of the present age, but I hope you will give me leave to tell you without being offended that I wish you many years of happiness. . . . The physicians have at last advised my sister to the Bath waters. We have been here a fortnight. They do not

disagree with her, that is all that can be said for the present. I think I have used you to a bad custom of late, that of writing two letters for one of yours. I am often told I have great assurance in writing to you at all, but I know you to be as much above criticising a letter of mine as I should be below your notice if I gave myself any affected airs. You have encouraged my correspondence, and I should be a brute if I did not make the best of such an opportunity. . . .'

DR. SWIFT TO MRS. PENDARVES.

'DUBLIN, *Jan.* 29, 1736.

'I had indeed some intention to go to Bath, but I had neither health or leisure for such a journey; those times are past with me, and I am older by fourscore since the first time I had the honour to see you. I got a giddiness of raw fruit when I was a lad in England, which I never could be wholly rid of, and it is now too late, so that I confine myself entirely to a domestic life. I am visited seldom, but visit much seldomer. I dine alone like a king, having few acquaintances, and those lessening daily. This town is not what you left it, and I impute the cause altogether to your absence. . . .

'It was impossible to answer your letter from Paradise [Mrs. Pendarves's name for Sir John Stanley's villa at Northend]—the old Grecians of Asia called every fine garden by that name; and besides, when I consulted some friends, they conceived that wherever you resided must needs be *paradise*. Yet this was too general a direction if you had a humour of rambling. With great submission, I am sorry to find a lady make use of the word *paradise*, from which *you* turned *us* out as well as *yourselves*; and pray tell me freely, how many of your sex bring it along

with them to their husband's houses? I was still at a loss where this paradise of yours might be, when Mrs. Donnellan discovered the secret. She said it was a place where K. Charles 1st in his troubles used to ride, because he found good watering for his horse! If *that be all*, we have ten thousand such paradises in this kingdom, of which you may have your choice, as my *bay mare* is ready to depose.

'It is either a very low way of thinking, or as great a failure of education in either sex, to imagine that any man increases in his critical faculty in proportion to his wit and learning; it falls out always directly contrary. A common carpenter will work more cheerfully for a gentleman skilled in his trade than for a conceited fool who knows nothing of it. I must despise a lady who takes me for a pedant, and you have made me half angry with so many lines in your letter which look like a kind of apology for writing to me. Besides, to say the truth, the ladies in general are *extremely mended* both in writing and reading since I was young, only it is to be hoped that in proper time gaming and dressing may reduce them to their native ignorance. A woman of quality, who had *excellent* good sense, was formerly my correspondent, but she scrawled and spelt like a Wapping wench, having been brought up in a Court at a time before reading was thought of any use to a female; and I know several others of *very high quality* with the same defect. . . .'

MRS. PENDARVES TO DR. SWIFT.

'London, *April* 22, 1736.

'I am sorry you make use of so many good arguments for not coming to the Bath; I was in hopes you might be prevailed with. I left the Bath last Sunday se'night, very full and gay. I think Bath a more *comfortable* place

to live in than London: all the entertainments of the place lie in a small compass, and you are at liberty to partake of them or let them alone, just as it suits your humour. This town is grown to *such an enormous size*, that *above half the day* must be spent in the streets, going from one place to another. I like it every year less and less. . . .

'When I went out of town last autumn, the reigning madness was Farinelli; I find it now turned on Pasquin, a dramatic satire on the times. It has had almost as long a run as the Beggars' Opera; but in my opinion not with equal merit, though it has humour. Monstrous preparations are making for the Royal wedding [of Frederic, Prince of Wales]. I am too poor and too dull to make one among the fine multitude. The newspapers say my Lord Carteret's youngest daughter is to have the Duke of Bedford; I hear nothing of it from the family, but think it not unlikely. The Duke of Marlborough and his grandmother [widow of the famous duke] are upon bad terms; the Duke of Bedford, who has also been ill-treated by her, has offered the Duke of Marlborough to supply him with ten thousand pounds a year if he will go to law and torment the old Dowager! The Duke of Chandos's marriage[1] has made a great noise, and the poor Duchess is often reproached with being bred up in Burr Street, Wapping. . . .'

'*Sept.* 2, 1736.

'I never will accept of the writ of ease you threaten me with; do not flatter yourself with any such hopes; I receive too many advantages from your letters to drop a correspondence of such consequence to me. I am really grieved that you are so much persecuted with a giddiness in your head; the Bath and travelling would certainly be of use to you. . . . I am uneasy to know how you do,

[1] The Duke's third wife was the widow of Sir Thomas Davall, knight.

and have no other means for that satisfaction but from your own hand. I should have made this inquiry sooner, but that I have this summer undertaken a work that has given me full employment, which is making a grotto in Sir John Stanley's garden at Northend, and it is chiefly composed of shells I had from Ireland. My life, for two months past, has been very like a hermit's; I have had all the comforts of life but society, and have found living quite alone a pleasanter thing than I imagined. The hours I could spend in reading have been entertained by Rollin's *History of the Ancients* in French. I am very well pleased with it, and think your Hannibals, Scipios, and Cyruses prettier fellows than are to be met with nowadays. Painting and music have had their share in my amusements. . . .

'I suppose you have heard of Mr. Pope's accident, which had liked to have proved a fatal one. He was leading a young lady into a boat from his own stairs, when her foot missed the side of the boat, she fell into the water and pulled Mr. Pope after her: the boat slipped away and they were immediately out of their depth, and it was with some difficulty they were saved. The young lady's name was Talbot; she is as remarkable for being a handsome young woman as Mr. Pope is for wit. I think I cannot give you a higher notion of her beauty, unless I had named you instead of him. . . .'

This seems to be the last letter that has been preserved of the correspondence with Swift. In this year, 1736, the brain trouble, with which he had long been threatened, entered upon an acuter phase, and it soon became necessary to place his affairs in the hands of trustees. Swift died in 1745, and his old friend, Dr. Delany, was one of his eight executors.

CHAPTER VII

(1736-1740)

THE letters to Anne Granville continue to give an account of all the amusements and occupations of her sister's life. In May 1736, Anne, who had been staying in town, returned to Gloucester, and on the very evening of her departure, Mary writes to describe how she has passed that 'dismal day':—

'I curled, powdered, dressed, and went to Mrs. Montagu at one, from thence to Court, where we were touzled and pushed about to make room for citizens in their fur gowns who came to make their compliments to the royal pair. With great difficulty we made our curtsey to the Princess of Wales, but as for the Prince, you might as well have made your compliments to him at Henley! It was actually more crowded than the day we went to be presented. From the Princess's Court we went to the Queen's, and made our reverence. I dined with our agreeable friends, who like you too much not to feel for me to-day. It is now just eight; my Lady Colladon has made me promise to go with her in the morning to Vanderbank's, the painter's. . . . I have taken my walk with Lady Colladon. From Vanderbank's we went to Marylebone, and walked in the gardens, but sun and dust destroyed the pleasure of the walk.'

It is in this year that we first find Mrs. Pendarves staying with her friend, the Duchess of Portland, at Bulstrode, a place that, in later life, became to her as a

second home. In October 1736, she writes from Bulstrode to Mrs. Catherine Collingwood:

'It is not fair to enjoy all the pleasures of this place without communicating them to you, but I think it will be best to be silent on that head for two reasons: one is, that I am at a loss to tell you how well pleased I am with my entertainment; the other is, not to tantalise you. . . . The Duchess received your letter this morning, and gave it a kind welcome. Don't imagine she would have wrote to you to-day if I had not, for that will make you wish my pen, ink, and paper in the fire. She could not possibly have wrote to you, for what with praying, entertaining agreeable company, kissing Lady Betty, and writing four long letters of great importance, she had not an inch to spare. We make use of the fine weather, and walk all over the park and gardens: they are very fine, and so is the house; and though we live as magnificently as the Prince of Wales, I am as easy as if I was at home, which is charming and very uncommon.

'Dear Colly, send me a little news privately, for I have exposed my ignorance strangely since my being here. Nobody by my conversation could think that I was just come from London, but rather imagine that I had spent my life on the mountains! We have variety of amusements, as reading, working, and drawing in the morning; in the afternoon the scene changes, there are billiards, looking over prints, coffee, tea, and by way of interlude, pretty Lady Betty comes upon the stage, and I can play as well at bo-peep as if I had a nursery of my own. She is the best-humoured little dear that ever I met with. . . .'

At Bulstrode Mrs. Pendarves's literary and artistic tastes met with sympathy and encouragement, and we even find her working at astronomy, a study which, knowing the light

in which a learned lady was regarded by her contemporaries, she was especially anxious to pursue in private. But her secret was discovered by a member of that sex which was then so desperately jealous of any mental cultivation in a 'female,' whose sphere in life, it held, should be bounded by the nursery and the store-room. 'This morning,' writes Mary, 'as my master and I were drawing and examining circles, who should come in but Mr. Robert Harley. I blushed and looked excessive silly to be caught in the fact; but the affair, which I have endeavoured to keep secret, is discovered, and I must bear the reflection of those who think me very presuming in *attempting to be wise.* I shall never aim at talking upon subjects of that kind, but the little I gain by these lectures will make me take far more pleasure in hearing others talk.'

In December, Mrs. Pendarves was in great distress for her young friend, Lady Weymouth, whose marriage she had been instrumental in bringing about. 'My Lady Weymouth continues extremely ill,' she writes to her sister. 'She has not had since this day se'night three hours' sleep, and she has been the greater part of that time delirious. So melancholy a house I never saw, and poor Lady Carteret is to be pitied. I go to them every day, and think I am some comfort to them. Last night I was in hopes I might have burned this letter, Lady Weymouth mended so much, but her fever returned at twelve last night. I prayed for her most heartily this morning at early church, but God Almighty designs her for a happier place. She has discharged all her social duties with great honour, and I believe her to be an innocent well-disposed creature. I own I did not know I loved her so well as I do. . . . Poor Lady Weymouth is gone; she died at half an hour after five. I can add no more.'

'*Jan.* 4, 1737.

'I received your letter just as I was stepping into my chair to go to Lord Weymouth's dismal house, to the christening of Master James Thynne. I personated Mrs. How. The office I own was terrible to me, but I could not refuse it. I endeavoured to think of the poor woman who was once brilliant there as placed in more glory and eternal happiness, but my thoughts would turn on her poor children and servants, and the agonies I saw her in the last time I was in that house.'

Early in the new year, Anne Granville came to town to stay with her sister, and the two were probably together for several months. The difficulties of winter travelling in those days is illustrated by the following passage in a letter of Mrs. Pendarves, suggesting arrangements for the journey: 'The frost that gave me such spirits is gone, and but little hopes of any that can mend the roads. What shall I do to get you safely thro' the mud and dirt that is between us? Have you examined the coachmen? Sure the roads are not worse than usual, and I believe the stage-coach is safer than any other conveyance at this time of the year, because they know every hole in the road, and there are no waters on the Oxford Road. But then be careful of cold, and wrap up warm. I have wound myself up with the expectation of having you (upon my mama's indulgence in saying she would spare you to me), and my disappointment will be very great if you should not come, and yet I would not have you run any hazards.'

In a letter (undated) to Miss Collingwood, Mrs. Pendarves gives some account of her doings during the summer: 'Let me tell you, you exult too soon; I cannot yet own my wager lost [a wager that instead of going into a

convent, she would be married before the strawberry season was over]. Designing and acting are two things, but if I do lose it I will pay honestly, and contrive a way for you to receive it on the spot it was lost. I have done a thousand things since I saw you, and well I may, modestly speaking. I was in London for twenty minutes, but it being devotion time, I would not attempt calling on you. I have had some company with me, been at Isleworth, Twickenham, and Whitton Hounslow; seen Mr. Wingfield, his lady, and Mr. Pope's gardens; almost finished a history and a portrait; worked hard at my grotto; am to dine to-day at Osterley, Sir Francis Child's, and will do my utmost to smite the old knight.'

In the winter Mrs. Pendarves was again at Bulstrode, and in a letter to her sister gives a lively little sketch of the mode of life in a great country-house a century and a half ago. She begins with a fear that she will never be able to discharge her epistolary debts, for 'my Lord Oxford has lent me some curious drawings of Stonehenge to copy. They have employed me two mornings, and will two mornings more, so my writing-hour is drove down to the evening. Well, I must drink coffee at five, and play with the little jewels—it is the ceremony of the house. Then says the Duchess, "Don't go, Penny, till I have net one more row in my cherry-net," which proves a hundred meshes; then comes some prater and asks her Grace a question; the arm suspended in the air forgets its occupation; she answers, and asks some other question in return —ten to one but a laugh is hatched, and once in a quarter of an hour the netting-work is remembered! With patience I await her solemn motions, and by half an hour after six we are in the dressing-room, armed with pen and ink, the fair field prepared to receive the attack.

Then comes Lady Elizabeth, Lady Harriet, and the noble Marquis; after half an hour's jumping they are dismissed, and we soberly say, "Now, we will write our letters." In comes the Duke, "The tea stays for the ladies"; well, we must go, for there's no living at Bulstrode without four meals a day. Then when the *beaux esprits* are met, the fumes of inspiring tea begin to operate till eight of the clock strikes; then I start up, run away, and here I am brimful of a thousand things to say to you, but have no time to write them.'

From time to time curious and minute particulars are given about the finery and fashions of the period. For example, we read that in January 1739 hoops are made of the richest damask, trimmed with gold and silver, and cost fourteen guineas a hoop. At the Court ball held in honour of the Prince of Wales' birthday, Lady Huntingdon's[1] costume was the most remarkable, as may readily be believed from the following description:—

'Her petticoat was of black velvet embroidered with chenille, the pattern a *large stone vase* filled with *ramping flowers* that spread almost over a breadth of the petticoat from the bottom to the top; between each vase of flowers was a pattern of gold shells and foliage embossed and most heavily rich. The gown was white satin embroidered also with chenille mixed with gold, no vase on the sleeve, but two or three on the tail; it was a most laboured piece of finery, the pattern much properer for a stucco staircase than the apparel of a lady.'

At another Court entertainment we hear that Mary's former lover, Lord Baltimore, was in light brown and silver, his coat lined quite throughout with ermine. Also, that 'his lady looked like a *frightened owl*, her locks strutted out, and most furiously greased, or rather gummed

[1] Selina, afterwards celebrated as the foundress of a Methodist sect.

and powdered.' There is a touch of malice in the last sentence, which is natural enough in the circumstances, and shows that though the writer's heart may have recovered from Lord Baltimore's defection, there was still a little wound left in her vanity.

In August the illness of the Duchess of Portland after the birth of a child caused all her friends great anxiety and alarm. The details given of her medical treatment make it seem almost miraculous that she recovered. On August 15 Anne Granville, who was staying with her sister, writes to Lady Throckmorton (*née* Collingwood): 'For fear my dear Colly should see in the newspapers an account of the Duchess of Portland, and be alarmed, I write to let her know really how she is. Doctor Sands says there is no danger, but she has fever, is reduced extremely low and weak, and had a blister put on to-day....

'*Aug.* 18, 1739.

''Tis the will of heaven, my dearest Colly, that we must resign our most amiable Duchess! My sister and I were at Whitehall yesterday morning. The Duchess's fever was then as high as ever, nor has there been any intermission for thirty days. Dr. Sands insisted on a consultation; Mead came, and only confirmed Sands' prescription, which was a blister on each arm, and a vomit! Last night we heard she was worse; this morning Sands gives her over, and poor Richard sent us the message that they "only expected the great change." My poor Penny is inconsolate. The poor Duke is truly sensible of his irreparable loss.

'*Saturday Night.*

'I am this moment come from Whitehall. *The Duchess is better*, and they have great hopes of her being able to struggle through it.'

Anne Granville

From a crayon drawing by Mrs Delany

'*Aug. 22nd.*

'With the greatest joy imaginable, I can assure my dear Lady Throck, that our dear Duchess is out of danger. You may guess the happiness this recovery gives to Lord and Lady Oxford, who were in the deepest affliction, and the Duke has shown himself very sensible of the blessing he enjoys in so excellent a creature. . . .'

The winter seems to have been spent in the usual fashion, including a visit to Bulstrode, and attendances at Court, and recreations in the shape of plays and oratorios. In November Mary writes to Lady Throckmorton: 'Our dear charming Duchess is as well as you can wish to have her—good looks, good spirits, and every good belonging to her that mortal woman can be possessed of. . . . As for news, I know of none: war is talked of in all companies, but my disposition always inclines me to wish for peace. I tremble at the thought of a battle, and for the many lives hazarded for our ill-conduct and ambition—but this is being a mere stupid woman! The concerts begin next Saturday at the Haymarket. Caristini sings, Peschetti composes; the house is made up into little boxes, like the playhouses abroad.'

The great event of the year 1740 was the marriage of Anne Granville to John Dewes, the younger son of Court Dewes of Maplebury. The way in which the affair was brought about is a curious example of the unromantic nature of matrimonial arrangements in the eighteenth century. Anne, warned perhaps by her sister's sufferings, had always regarded worth of character as the first essential in a husband, and in her youthful days had rejected numerous suitors because their principles were not equal to their fortunes. At thirty-five, however, she seems to have come to the conclusion that marriage, and a house of her

Anne Granville

From a crayon drawing by Mrs Delany

own, would be more for her advantage and happiness than a single life. Mr. Dewes, with whom she had no acquaintance, was recommended to her by a third person as a worthy man of good family though moderate fortune. A letter has been preserved from Anne to Lady Throckmorton begging to know her *real opinion* of Mr. Dewes.

'There is a person he is recommended to,' she proceeds, 'but she is quite a stranger to him, and is my friend, and therefore I make an inquiry about him, but I must entreat that not a word of it be mentioned to anybody, because the thing is an entire secret. The person I speak of has no notion of happiness in a married life but what must proceed from an *equality of sentiments* and *mutual good opinion*; and therefore she would be glad to know if Mr. D—— has agreeable conversation, generous principles, and is not a lawyer in his manners.'

Lady Throckmorton appears to have seen through the transparent fiction of the 'friend,' for in her next letter Anne admits that her guess was right, and adds that 'the parties are to meet in about a fortnight to see if they like well enough on each side to permit any procedure in the affair, and their friends will be consulted, and they will consider all particulars.' In a postscript she begs that Lady Throckmorton will not mention to Mrs. Pendarves the subject of their correspondence. It was evident that Mary was to be kept in the dark till matters were finally settled, partly perhaps on account of her anti-matrimonial prejudices, partly because she might not consider Mr. Dewes a sufficiently good match for her sister. The negotiations proved successful, and towards the end of April Mrs. Pendarves was let into the secret. She writes to Anne on April 22, 1740, in sober and uneffusive style:—

'Your letter to my brother has *cheered my spirits* a

good deal. I think Mr. Dewes behaves himself like a man of sense, and with a regard for you which must recommend him to all your friends. My brother and myself will receive him with a great deal of pleasure as soon as his business permits him to come to us. As soon as we have met, and he has settled with my brother, then we may proceed to particulars, buying wedding-clothes, and determining where the ceremony is to be. . . . Last Saturday I went a most notable expedition. We set out, two hackney-coaches full, from Whitehall at ten. Our first show was the wild beasts in Covent Garden; from thence to St. Bartholomew's Hospital—the staircase painted by Hogarth; from there to Faulkner's, the famous lapidary, where we saw abundance of fine things, and the manner of cutting and polishing pebbles, etc.; then to Surgeon's Hall to see the famous picture by Holbein of Harry the Eighth, with above a dozen figures in it, all portraits; then to the Tower and Mint—the assaying of the gold and silver is very curious; saw lions, porcupines, armour and arms in abundance; from thence to Pontach's to a very good dinner, and then proceeded to the round church in Stocks Market, a most beautiful building.'

The marriage took place in August 1740, and the pair established themselves in a small country-house at Bradley in Gloucestershire. Mr. Dewes is described in the various family letters that relate to this period as a man of good sense, good nature, and general worth of character. Although for some years his means were narrow, the marriage seems to have been a happy one, in a calm unromantic sort of fashion. Anne, writing to Lady Throckmorton shortly after the wedding, expresses herself with all the philosophical common-sense of her period :—

'I have got nothing in that state you seem so glad to see me come into, but what gives me a fair prospect of happiness, and though *our cot* between two oaks yields nothing fine, it affords content, and will always do so as long as affection remains in the inhabitants, and supplies the place of great apartments, equipages, and state, though when they are all joined together, as at Weston, it is very charming indeed. But alas! how rare! and I can't help thinking that there is for the generality more happiness in a middling than in a great fortune, and it is very proper for me to be of that opinion now, as Mr. Dewes's fortune is moderate, but his qualities are extremely good, which are to be preferred to riches, and I had no pretence to expect both.'

Mrs. Pendarves seems to have divided her time this year between her mother, her sister, and her friend at Bulstrode.

It was in November 1740 that the Duchess of Portland's little daughter, Lady Elizabeth Cavendish Bentinck (then about five years old), wrote the following note to Mrs. Dewes, which is worth transcribing, because thereby hangs a tale:—

'Dear Pip,—I love you with all my heart. Mrs. Elstob [the governess] gives her service to you. I thank you for the pretty letter you sent me by Penny. I learn very well the Common Prayer Book and Bible, and have almost got by heart the "Turtle and Sparrow." Papa and mama's best compliments to you. I have learnt "Molly Mog of the Rose," and am learning now the English Grammar. I should be very glad to see you, and am, my dear Pip, your affectionate friend,

'Elizabeth Cavendish Bentinck.'

Among Lady Llanover's papers is a letter from Sir

William Watkins Wynn enclosing a cutting of a paragraph which he had contributed to the *Cambrian News* on January 14, 1880. After quoting the above note to 'dear Pip' from the Delany correspondence, Sir William proceeds: 'About the year 1823, I went to breakfast at the house of the above lady [Lady Elizabeth]. She was then Marchioness-Dowager of Bath, and lived in Charles Street or Hill Street—I think the former. Of the party were two of Lady Bath's nieces, the Misses Cotes, and a Miss Arbuthnot. After breakfast we went to a review in Hyde Park, where in the crowd Miss Arbuthnot lost her shoe, for which we had a difficult search. We afterwards adjourned to Lady Stamford's, Lady Bath's sister, for luncheon. So I, who am alive and in health on Jan. 2, 1880, visited at the house of a lady who wrote a letter on the 23rd of November, 1740. W.'

One of Mrs. Pendarves's fellow-guests at Bulstrode was Miss Robinson, afterwards the celebrated wit and blue-stocking, Mrs. Edward Montagu. This lady, writing to Mrs. Donnellan in December, says: 'Madame Pen. [Pendarves] is copying Sacharissa's portrait from Vandyck, and does it with that felicity of genius that attends her in all her performances. I believe, could Waller see it, he would begin to make new verses on her, and ask of the picture, as he does of the image of his dream—

> "Where could'st thou find
> Shades to counterfeit that face?"

In the same month Mrs. Pendarves writes to Lady Throckmorton that she cannot attempt to describe the variety of scenes she has passed through during a year of extraordinary hurry, and adds, 'But to crown all my toils, *I hope I may venture to say* I do think my sister

happily settled. You that have a tender heart can easily guess what agitation of spirits I have been under, for marriage is *serious and hazardous*, and you know what my fondness is for my sister. You say very right, I am extremely happy at Bulstrode, and 'tis Bulstrode alone that could make me cheerful and easy when I am parted from my sister. But as our joys circulate very fast, mine will ebb as well as flow, and London, odious London, will rob me of the delight I now enjoy. That little exclamation against the metropolis is *entre nous*, for I would not openly declare my thoughts on that subject for fear of being hissed off the stage as soon as I made my appearance again. I hear what would be whispered about me with a shrug of the shoulders: "Ten years ago she was of another mind—you may see the reason plainly in her face."'

In Mary's letters to her sister at this time there are one or two amusing literary allusions, of which the following examples may be given:—

'I am just come from the tea-table, where we have had a warm dispute, occasioned by Madame de Sévigné's letters, which one of the company said were very fulsome, and wanted variety of expression to make them agreeable, and that a very sincere, affectionate person could never be at a loss for a new thought on such a subject as friendship. If they were, it was a mark that their friendship was not very warm. The lady that started the dispute would not yield the point, but maintained the heart might be very warm though the imagination was not very bright. Another lady said that was her opinion too, and that words may be wanting where love is not; upon which says a wise philosopher in company, "What need you to be in a fuss about sweet words? Cannot

you say 'my syrup of violets,' or 'my syrup of cowslips'?" This turned the disputant spirit into a loud laugh, dispersed the company, and gives me an opportunity of flying to her for whom no expressions can be too kind to do justice to her merit and my love. . . .

'We have begun *Pamela*, but I will not say anything of it till you give me your opinion. By the time it comes to you, I suppose you and my good brother-in-law may have chatted over all the transactions that have passed during your separation, and may be glad to read a new book for variety. . . . I hear a monument is now putting up for Shakespeare in Westminster Abbey. Many Latin inscriptions have been offered to adorn the same, and set forth his worth, and one was sent to Pope for his approbation; the sense of it meant, that after many years' neglect Shakespeare appeared with general acclamation. Mr. Pope could not very well make out the meaning, and enclosed it to Dr. Mead with the following translation:

> '"After an hundred and thirty years' nap,
> Enter Shakespeare with a loud clap."

I will, if I have time to copy it out, enclose you a copy of verses of his that I believe have not come into your hands, but there is a line or two I think had better have been omitted. I wish poets would be more delicate, or at least have some respect for those that are so.'

With the new year Mrs. Pendarves was back in town, and disporting herself at Norfolk House, which was then inhabited by the Prince and Princess of Wales. As usual, she gives her sister an account of the fine toilets she sees, and her description of the Duchess of Queensberry's clothes is worth transcribing as a veritable curiosity in millinery. 'They were white satin embroidered, the

bottom of the petticoat *brown hills* covered with all sorts of weeds, and every breadth had an *old stump of a tree*, that ran up almost to the top of the petticoat, broken and ragged, and worked with brown chenille, round which twined nasturtiums, ivy, honeysuckles, periwinkles, and all sorts of twining flowers, which spread and covered the petticoat; vines with the leaves variegated as you have seen them by the sun, all rather smaller than nature, which made them look very light; the robings and facings were little green banks covered with all sorts of weeds, and the sleeves and the rest of the gown loose twining branches of the same sort as those on the petticoat. Many of the leaves were finished with gold, and part of the stumps of the trees looked like the gilding of the sun. I never saw a piece of work so prettily fancied, and am quite angry with myself for not having the same thought, for it is infinitely handsomer than mine, and could not have cost *much more*.'

CHAPTER VIII

(1741-1744)

The chief event of the summer of 1741 was the birth of a son to Mr. and Mrs. Dewes. Mary naturally felt the deepest interest in the new arrival, and took an active part in the preparations for his advent. In April she writes to her sister, 'I have had no trouble about any of your affairs, but much pleasure; I shall send the box this week, but cannot get the Cicero for you. The band-box, basket, and pincushion you must be so good as to accept from me. I will keep myself perfectly informed of the new dress for the bantling, that I may instruct you when I come to Gloucester. I suppose you will have the cradle lined with dimity or white satin quilted; I think you must pay the compliment to Gloucester of buying your pins there . . .'

Anne writes a pretty letter of thanks in which she congratulates her sister upon her arrival at Northend, 'the seat of delight,' and goes on, 'But you carry delight with you, and then fancy you find it there.

> '"Dame of the ruddy cheek and laughing eye,
> From whose bright presence crowds of sorrows fly."

Health, content, and every blessing attend you, for you were certainly born to cheer as well as charm all your friends. . . . I should have begun by answering your

kind packet of the 23rd, where you give so exact an account of all the trouble you have had about my affairs, which I am sure are all done to perfection. There is but one thing I can complain of, and that is the bandbox and the basket. How, my dearest sister, can I want any new proofs of your love when I have so many already grafted into my heart? . . . No mortal could describe the pleasures of the country as you do, did they not feel them exquisitely; but in your bower you have art joined to nature to make it beyond compare. Here we are all wildness, though not without our beauties; and though no nightingales reach our peaceful groves, they want not harmony, such as larks, blackbirds, and goldfinches. Our hedges and fields are verdant, and the apple and pear-trees make a very gaudy appearance. I want to send you some of our jocund lambs—they raise our spirits by their innocent liveliness. The cow is grown an absolute beauty, and is more worthy now of the honour of your pencil than when you drew her picture. Our grounds are covered with cowslips, and, in short, we have more spring and freshness than could be expected from so dry a season. But I cannot enjoy our solitude so much as if I were as nimble as usual, and when Mr. Dewes leaves me, who is so kind as to lead me through all the pleasant easy walks, and who enjoys every field and every tree as I do, I shall be obliged to sit still.'

It certainly was no more than true that Mrs. Pendarves was a comfort as well as a charm to her friends, since she always seems to have been sent for in sickness or affliction. Writing to Mrs. Dewes on June 18, 1742, she says: 'I was transported with pleasure at receiving so lively an account of yourself as your last letter gave me; I wanted such a cordial last night, for I had spent four hours in a

melancholy way with our amiable duchess, who is under great affliction for my Lord Oxford [her father]. He was taken ill on Saturday night: one of his legs has mortified. He is in no pain at present, and will soon be quite at rest. His daughter, who has, joined to the most lively sensibility, great gratitude and affection for him and my Lady Oxford, suffers a great deal now, and you may think I shall not leave her till her spirits are composed. My Lord Oxford has of late been so entirely given up to drinking, that his life has been no pleasure to him nor satisfaction to his friends; my Lady Oxford never leaves his bedside, and is in great trouble. The scene is painful to all his friends, but he has sense and goodness of heart, and I hope proper reflections on this great occasion, and when the first shock is over, there are circumstances that must be an alleviation to his woes. He has had no enjoyment of the world since his mismanagement of his affairs: it has hurt his body and mind, and hastened *death*. Pray God preserve us from too great anxiety for worldly affairs.'

To the year 1742 belongs a composition called *Aspasia's Portrait*, drawn by 'Philomel.' This is a description of Mrs. Pendarves by Mrs. Donnellan, written for the Duchess of Portland. Partial as the portrait probably is, a few extracts from it will give some idea of the original as she appeared in the eyes of her most intimate friends. 'You know, madam,' begins this quaint composition, 'that Mrs. P—— is of a most agreeable figure, and you may believe that (as it is above twenty years since she was married) the bloom she still enjoys, the shining delicacy of her hair, the sweetness of her smile, the pleasing air of her whole countenance, must have made her the desire of all who saw her, and her

situation (as a widow) must have given hopes to all. She was married extremely young to a man who, neither by his years, behaviour, nor any other quality, was fitted to gain her affection; she had naturally a great deal of vivacity and liveliness of temper, with the greatest sensibility and tenderness of heart. Some of her nearest relations were ever ready to have encouraged her in any tendency towards gaiety. What could have guarded her in these dangerous circumstances? An innate modesty, an early prudence, and a disarming judgment to know what was right, *with virtue*, and only to follow what her judgment approved—these were the qualities that have carried her through the gayest companies, the most dangerous scenes, with an unsullied fame, and have made even those who would have undermined her virtue pay homage to it. . . .

'I am at a loss what terms to find strong enough to express her general benevolence or her particular tenderness. . . . As her generosity to her friends flows from her benevolence, so does her charity both to the wants and character of her fellow-creatures: the first she relieves with a bounty above her circumstances, and the latter she defends (when decency will permit) with a zeal equal to the amiable principle whence it proceeds. She does not think that being perfect herself gives her a title to animadvert on the faults or laugh at the follies of those less worthy, but would rather choose to seem to want penetration to find out the first, or wit to ridicule the latter, than to hurt those who can make no reprisals on her. . . .

'To this imperfect sketch of her mind I must add something on her many accomplishments and her great ingenuity; and here we should wonder how she has found time to make herself mistress of so many ingenious arts,

if we did not consider that dress and the adorning of the person, that takes up so great a part of that of most of her sex, only employs so much of hers as the exactest neatness requires, and that she has an activity of mind that never lets her be idle, so all her hours are spent either in something useful or amusing. She reads to improve her mind, not to make an appearance of being learned; she writes with all the delicacy and ease of a woman, and the strength and exactness of a man; she paints, and takes views of what is either beautiful or whimsical in nature, with a surprising genius and art. She is mistress of the harpsichord, and has a brilliancy in her playing peculiar to herself; she does a number of works, and of many of them is the inventor, and all her acquaintance are her copyers—happy for them if they would equally endeavour to imitate her virtues. . . .

'I could enlarge on all these particulars much more, but I consider I detain you too long from the pleasing entertainment of observing the actions of one whose whole life will better show you that charity and benevolence have been the gales that have filled the sails, and judgment and prudence the pilots that have shaped her course.'

The long-standing acquaintance between Mrs. Pendarves and the 'Queen of the Blue-stockings,' Mrs. Edward Montagu, seems to have ripened into a more intimate friendship about this time. In September 1742 Mrs. Montagu writes a rather extravagant epistle, which is apparently in answer to a more formal one of Mrs. Pendarves. 'Madam,' observes the learned lady, 'certainly makes a magnificent figure at the beginning of a letter, and "Devoted humble servant" brings matters to a polite conclusion; but "Friend" and "Fidget" sound more affectionately and much better from my dear Mrs.

Pendarves, though with some people I would be "Madam," "Honoured Madam," "Your Reverence," or anything that assured me they would treat me with the most distant respect they could; but ceremony is the tribute of civility, not of friendship. . . . We are reading Sir Philip Sidney's famous romance, which is far exceeding the exceedingness of the most exceeding imagination; . . . Seriously, it is a pity that two such excellent geniuses of Queen Elizabeth's day as Spenser and Sir Philip should write of only such feigned and imaginary beings as fairies and lovers; now that the world is not superstitious and credulous, such personages are not so well received as they used to be.'

It appears from the correspondence, that in the autumn of this year Mrs. Pendarves had determined to apply for a place at Court, and that interest was being made for her through her powerful friends. The Duchess of Portland is annoyed that Lord Carteret does not show more energy in taking up his cousin's cause, and recommends that Mary should ask help and counsel of Lord Baltimore, who had considerable influence at Court. The affair dragged on, however, and by April of the following year nothing had been settled. In this month an unexpected incident occurred which altered all the lady's plans, and marked the beginning of a new period in her history. On April 23, 1743, Mary writes to her sister in rather a desponding strain because her friends have taken no steps to help her to obtain the much-desired place at Court. On the very same day a letter containing an offer of marriage was being written to her by her old friend Dr. Delany, who had lost his first wife about eighteen months before. The letter is interesting as a specimen of the method in which a sensible, straightforward man who

had already passed middle age, made an offer of his hand and heart a century and a half ago. The document, which was written at Dunstable, begins:—

'MADAM,—I am thus far on my way to visit my friends in London. You, madam, are not a stranger to my present unhappy situation, and that it pleased God to desolate my dwelling. I flatter myself that I have still a heart turned to social delights, and not estranged either from the tenderness of true affection or the refinement of friendship. I feel a sad void in my breast, and am reduced to the necessity of wishing to fill it. I have lost a friend that was as my own soul, and nothing is more natural than to desire to supply that loss by the person in the world that friend most esteemed and honoured; and as I have long been persuaded that perfect friendship is nowhere to be found but in marriage, I wish to perfect mine in that state. I know it is late in life to think of engaging anew in that state, in the beginning of my fifty-ninth year. I am old, and I appear older than I am; but, thank God, I am still in health, though not bettered by years; and however the vigour of my years may be over, and with that the vigour of vanity and the flutter of passion, I find myself not less fitted for all that is solid happiness in the wedded state—the tenderness of affection and the faith of friendship.

'I have a good clear income for my life, a trifle to settle, which I am ashamed to offer, a good house (as houses go in our part of the world) moderately furnished, a good many books, a pleasant garden (better, I believe, than when you saw it), etc. Would to God I might have leave to lay them all at your feet.

'You will, I hope, pardon me the presumption of this

wish, when I assure you it is no way blemished by the vanity of thinking them worthy of your acceptance; but as you have seen the vanities of the world to satiety, I allowed myself to indulge a hope that a retirement at this time of life with a man whose turn of mind is not wholly foreign to your own, and for that only reason not wholly unworthy of you—a man who knows your worth, and honours you as much as he is capable of honouring anything that is mortal—might not be altogether abhorrent from the views of your humble and unearthly wisdom. This I am sure of, that if you reject my unworthy offering, your humility will not let you do it with disdain; and if you condescend to accept it, the goodness of your nature and generosity of your heart will prompt you to do it in a way most becoming your own dignity, and the security of my eternal esteem and inexpressible gratitude: at all events, let me not be impaired in the honour of your friendship, since it is impossible I can cease to be, with the truest veneration and esteem, madam, your most humble and most obedient servant,

'PAT. DELANY.'

Mrs. Pendarves's reply to this proposal has not been handed down; but it is evident, from Dr. Delany's subsequent letters, that she was inclined to accept it, though she made her consent conditional upon the approval of her mother and brother. Mr. Granville was strongly opposed to the match on account of the suitor's lack of family and fortune, while Mrs. Granville appears at first to have taken an equally unfavourable view. Nearly a fortnight later Dr. Delany writes again:—

'MADAM,—Though I can scarcely hold a pen in my hand, I cannot help attempting to inform you that I

apprehended from a moment's conversation with your brother this morning in the street that his visit to Northend has made some change in his sentiments in relation to me. I beseech you, madam, leave me not to the caprice of any of your friends, and much less to the mercy of every humour of every friend. Where you *owe duty*, pay it, and let me rise or fall by the determination of duty; but let not the decision depend upon the fickle, the uncertain, and the selfish. God has blessed you with noble sentiments, a good understanding, and a generous heart; are not these, under God, your best governors? I might venture to pronounce that even a parent has no right to control you at this time of life and under your circumstances, in opposition to these, and a brother has no shadow of right.

'Bless me with one minute's conversation before you go, and fix my fate—thus far indeed it is already fixed, that I am, and must for ever be, unalterably yours.'

The negotiations dragged on for some weeks longer. On May 12th Dr. Delany writes: 'I have the honour of a letter from Mrs. Granville; it is not unfriendly, and leaves my happiness where I wish it may rest for ever on this side heaven—*at your feet*. Might I hope to have one ray of hope conveyed to me in half a line by the bearer?

'*May* 14.—I have sent the message agreed on to Lady G. by my friend, who undertook it with a zeal and frankness that doubles his merit. He delighted me beyond measure by letting me see he honoured you highly, that is almost half as much as I do. It is too much presumption to ask, are you alone? It is much more so to be happy with you one moment. Adieu!'

Mrs. Pendarves seems to have had considerable difficulty in making up her mind, not so much from want of inclination to accept her elderly lover, as from reluctance to offend her relations. On May 12th, in an unpublished letter to her sister from Merryworth, where she was staying with Lady Westmoreland, she writes: 'If my mind was at full liberty I might give you a description of this place that would amuse you, but at present I cannot collect my thoughts enough to give you any great entertainment. I go to town to-day, and I suppose I shall find a letter from my dear mama or from you to the same purpose. My answer to D. D. [Dr. Delany] depends upon that, for it will be doing wrong both by him and myself to keep him any longer in suspense. I shall leave this place at eleven and propose being at home at eight in the evening, and now I will think no more of the grand affair, but scribble on at any rate to tell you a little of this place, and how I have passed my time. I went to St. George's Church on Sunday morning, from thence to breakfast at my Lady Westmoreland's, and at ten my Lord and my Lady, your humble servant, and my Lady's woman, and the little dog set out. The] day hot and dusty till we had left London about ten miles behind us, and then we grew sensible of the sweet country air. I can't say I am charmed with the county of Kent; the road was dull eno'. The approach to Merryworth is very handsome, and the house is the prettiest building I ever saw. . . .

'My Lord Westmoreland is a very good sort of a plain man, easy and civil. She is polite, sensible, and ingenious, but too reserved. She is perfect mistress of several languages, particularly Latin; but has no ostentation of her learning, and rather takes pains to hide it. I could have

had great enjoyment of this place had I not had so great an anxiety on my spirits, but I believe Lady Westmoreland has thought me very insensible to all the pleasures here, for I have showed but little relish to them. I shall be better when I am determined, let the determination be what it will.'

Sir John Stanley undertook to act as mediator with Mr. Granville, and by May 29th the whole affair seems to have been settled, for an unpublished letter from Mrs. Dewes to her sister, with that date, runs as follows:—

'My head and heart are so entirely occupied about you, my dearest sister, that I could spend every moment in writing, since I am denied the more perfect way of telling you my present crowd of thoughts and wishes, and I would gratifie the vast desire I have of being with you at this time (and I may say *I would*, having no *tyrant* to control me, but a kind director to advise, which I hope will be your case), did I not fear the journey would tire me so much that I should give you more pain than pleasure. . . . Mr. Dewes sets out to-morrow and will be in town on Thursday; he will have the pleasure of speaking for himself to *all* our friends; therefore I shall partly leave it to him. Also, to enforce my request of seeing you, my dearest sister, as soon as you have *settled* all your affairs, and surely I need not say how welcome every friend of yours must be to me, but especially those [*sic*] whom you have taken to be your first and most *particular friend*; and they will come doubly recommended by their own merit, and your distinction of it, and indeed Doctor Delany must make me amends by letting me have a great deal of your company hereafter for retarding my happiness now. The high notion he has of justice as well as tender affections will induce him to it, for you can

inform him how much of the *softness* and *infirmity* of friendship I have, while he will find in you all the strength, ardour, and sentiments that can make the most perfect friend and agreeable companion. Happy, happy man to possess such a treasure! Surely Providence has given him the great blessing as a reward in this world for the zeal he has show'd in the cause of religion and good of mankind. . . . Alas, my dear Penny, it makes me tremble when you say 'tis *three weeks* before an answer can return from Ireland! What an age to an impatient heart anxious for the health and circumstances of a belov'd friend! But that 's a thought I must not, dare not, trust myself to encourage. . . .

'How does the eagerness of my thoughts hurry me away from what I ought first to mention, the commands of our dear mama? She sends you her tenderest blessing, and desires you will act in every respect as is most suitable to your own affairs, inclination, and the opinion of the friends you are with. I believe I told you so last post, but as I find by your letter last night you are very much pressed to conclude everything before you leave London, she desires you won't perplex yourself about receiving her assent to every particular, when in general she shall be pleased with what you do; and as long as you have my brother to consult and advise you, I hope you will be easy; but I wish you would let me lay your scheme. Let all writings be finished as soon as possible, that the Bishop of Gloster may not have left London, for I like his prayers and blessing, which, as soon as you have received, set out for Bradley; tho' our cottage and entertainment is of the most rural kind, the affection it contains, and quiet it admits, will be more agreeable upon such an occasion than a splendid palace with the

interruptions of company and equipage. And if my brother Granville will be so good to come with you, I can really make room. Now, I know he will laugh, and think it impossible, but I assure you 'tis not, and I wish he would try; for Love is a fairy art that can enlarge all things. . . .'

Mrs. Dewes, when once she had reconciled herself to the match, was evidently determined not to do things by halves, for on June 3rd we find her writing to her future brother-in-law:—

'Though it is very natural to like those persons who are valued and distinguished by a favourite friend, yet I must assure you that my respect and admiration you have had long before I could imagine that there would be any other attachment than what is due to uncommon merit; but I now with great willingness and pleasure will add sisterly affection and esteem, which I dare say must increase upon acquaintance, and as you *make her happy* who is endeared to me by the strongest ties of love and obligation. If you find she has not entirely misplaced her friendship, and will add yours to it, I shall be vastly glad, and if the most ardent prayers and wishes for your mutual happiness is any degree of merit, then I own I have a great deal, and fear I can claim no other.

'The just sense you have of my sister's extreme worth gives me infinite delight; I never thought she could meet with any one sensible enough of those delicacies in her disposition that complete the most amiable part of a woman's character, but now I believe she has; which will greatly alleviate what I shall suffer from her absence. Her absence is a subject I will not mention, for as I now sincerely desire to promote your happiness, I trust in your

generosity to deprive me of as little of mine as is in your power to avoid; and shall put Mrs. Pendarves in mind how much joy and satisfaction she retards by staying in London longer than is absolutely necessary.'

Although her mother and sister were reconciled to the match, Mary was never completely forgiven by her brother for what he regarded as a *mésalliance*; and it is evident that her Granville relations and many of her old friends were disappointed in her, and inclined to look coldly upon her husband. In the days when a woman was regarded as a fool to refuse a good settlement because it was accompanied by a dull and vicious husband, it is obvious that she would not be thought very wise who accepted a man of obscure family and moderate means merely because he happened to be possessed of high moral and intellectual gifts. In her younger days Mary had several times run the risk of offending her family by rejecting the offers of rich and titled suitors. Like her sister, she had shrunk from the idea of marriage with one of the foolish or dissipated young men of fashion who hovered round her; but, unlike Anne, she had demanded exceptional intellect as well as worth of character in a husband.

We have seen how strongly she had been attracted by the social charms of Dr. Delany's circle thirteen years before, and how eagerly she had grasped at the friendship of a literary giant like Swift. Now that she had reached middle life, she was beginning to feel the drawbacks of a lonely and objectless existence. That she had been in an unsettled state of mind for some months before she received Dr. Delany's proposal is evident from the fact of her having applied for a place at Court. The permanent friendship and companionship of a good and sensible man

held out a prospect of reasonable happiness and usefulness which she found it impossible to resist, and it seems certain that she never repented her marriage with Dr. Delany.

When once Mrs. Pendarves had made up her mind to the weighty step there was no further delay, and the wedding took place quietly on June 9, 1743. The newly-married couple spent the summer and autumn in paying visits to the bride's mother and sister, and to various friends. It was not until the winter that they returned to Mrs. Delany's house in Clarges Street. Their departure for Dublin was deferred until the spring in order that interest might be made with Mrs. Delany's powerful relations to obtain an Irish bishopric or deanery for her husband. Writing to her sister from Clarges Street on November 10, Mary says:—

'It was a most delightful welcome to my own house to hear so soon from my dear friends at Gloucester. I thank God we have had as good and pleasant a journey as we could possibly have wished for. Mr. Dewes has informed you, I suppose, of his safe arrival in town and adventures on the road. He left Burford about half an hour before us. After a good breakfast of caudle we set forward for Cornbury, and sent a messenger forward to ask leave to go through the park, and to say if my Lord C. was alone we would breakfast with him; he sent back an invitation to us to dine as well as breakfast, and entertained us with showing us his house, pictures, and park, which indeed are all as well worth seeing as anything in England, especially when he is there to do the honours. . . . The pictures are excessively fine, most of them Vandycks. As Lord Cornbury led me to the carriage, he said that "he was obliged to me that he now belonged to Dr. Delany,

and that he *had a right* to claim his friendship and acquaintance."'

A long visit was paid to Bulstrode in the course of the winter, and while there Mary received a friendly letter from Mrs. Montagu, in which that lady observes: 'None but the *present* Mrs. Delany can be *so good* as the *late* Mrs. Pendarves. . . . I ought to make some apology for not having wrote to you on your marriage, which, though custom seems to ordain, I think when a person chooses such a companion as you have done, it is almost an injury to interrupt their conversation. I am sure my good wishes and regard, and I must say my love for you, have had no intermission. I hope you will receive me into grace again, and allow me to write to you. Dr. Delany is happy in a companion like you, who takes a philosopher's and an artist's part in the natural world; to a mind that comprehends you have a hand that records and represents its beauties. Your drawing-room boasts of eternal spring—nature blooms there when it languishes in gardens; and not only prospects and landscapes are represented by your art, but even human passions and fugitive thoughts are expressed and fixed by the strokes of your pencil. . . .

'The fine weather we have had lately will have shown Bulstrode to Dr. Delany to better advantage than places usually appear at this time of year; and I observed in Dr. Delany a *greater goût* for the country, and a *better taste* for *rural beauty* than I almost ever met with. In his imagination I could perceive the *poet*, in his reflections the *philosopher*, and in both the *divine*.'

While staying at Bulstrode Mrs. Delany suffered from some indisposition, touching which Dr. Delany writes to Mrs. Dewes on January 11, 1744: 'I am set down, my

dear sister, with the worst pen and ink in the world, but the best goodwill to write to you, and to inform you that the Pearl is, I thank God, as fair and much more precious than ever. She is at this moment in high mirth with the Duchess; she eat her dinner with a good relish, and I think she is well disposed for her supper. She is mightily bent on going to town on Friday or Saturday next, and I am at least satisfied she may do it in safety. You who know me, and the treasure under my care, will not be surprised at my solicitude; indeed, my whole soul is, and has for some time been, divided between prayers and thanksgivings to Almighty God—thanksgivings for the blessing of such a wife, and earnest prayers for its continuance. I am got into a spirit of praying, and cannot indulge it more agreeably than in lifting up my heart to heaven for its choicest blessings on you all.'

Thanks to the sympathy and encouragement of her husband, Mary now devoted herself more industriously than ever to artistic pursuits. In March she writes to her sister: 'How do you think I have lately been employed? Why, I have made a drama for an oratorio out of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, to give Mr. Handel to compose to; it has cost me a deal of thought and contrivance. D. D. [Dr. Delany] approves of my performance, and that gives me some reason to think it not bad, though all I have had to do has been collecting and making the connection between the fine parts. . . . I would not have a word of Milton's altered; and I hope to prevail with Handel to set it without having any of the lines put into verse, for that will take from it its dignity. This, and painting three pictures, have been my chief morning occupation since I came to town.'

Mrs. Dewes' little boy was suffering from the ague, and

Mrs. Delany sends two infallible recipes—one consisting of a plaster made of ginger and brandy, the other of a spider put into a goose-quill, well sealed and secured, and hung about the child's neck. Either of these, she is convinced, will ease the ague! In the same month, March 1744, she mentions that the King had sent a message to the two houses to let them know that the Pretender's son was in France, and that they had undoubted intelligence that the French designed an invasion with the Brest fleet. It was expected that a good many disaffected persons in England would join them. A more cheerful piece of news was to the effect that 'Admiral Matthews has beaten the Spaniards, and the French have run away. The storm we had on Friday se'night stranded twelve of the French transports at Dunkirk, and lost them six hundred men.'

CHAPTER IX

(1744-1748)

A CENTURY and a half ago family interest was, of course, a far stronger weapon wherewith to fight the battle of life than it is at the present day, and it was the custom to ask frankly and openly for preferment. Mrs. Delany was the child of her age, and she was particularly anxious that her 'D. D.' should be promoted, partly, no doubt, because she felt that as a dignitary of the Church he would be raised in the estimation of her family. In a letter, dated January 19, 1744, she tells her sister that she has written a 'comical letter' to their kinsman, Lord Gower, in which she said that she was so reasonable as to have only three petitions to prefer at one time.

'I then mentioned Miss Granville,' she continues, 'recommended Mr. Dewes, and desired his interest with Lord Chesterfield to get the Bishopric of Kildare for D. D. My letter was a long one, and I have not time to transcribe it. Sometimes a letter of that kind is better remembered and listened to than a more serious one. You shall know the answer as soon as I get one. I am very eager about the Bishopric of Kildare; there is no preferment in Ireland so desirable for us, though many much greater in income, but this will give us the liberty of spending all the time we are in Ireland at Delville, and we may visit England more frequently than otherwise we should be able to do. I have written on this

subject to Lady Chesterfield, Lady Westmoreland, and Lord Cornbury. I think I have a pretty good chance of succeeding, if I don't speak too late.'

The coveted bishopric was not obtained, but early in May 1744 Dr. Delany was preferred to the Deanery of Down. On May 8, Mrs. Delany writes to Mrs. Dewes:—

'I told you that I should not write to you by this post, and I should have been as good as my word, but that the *Dean of Down* desires me to make his compliments to you! and to present his duty to my mother. . . . Yesterday, just as dinner came on the table, Lord Carteret came in. He desired I would send the servants away, and when they were gone, he told D. D. he was come from the Duke of Devonshire to offer him the Deanery of Down, and that the first small bishopric that fell in he might have if he afterwards cared to leave Down; but the Deanery is much better than any small bishopric, and we are well pleased with the possession of it.'

The following month, after a farewell family gathering at Calwich, Mr. Granville's place, the couple started for Ireland, and established themselves at Delville, Doctor Delany's villa near Dublin. On June 18, Mrs. Delany writes: 'How impatient I have been to let you know how happily we have performed our journey; and to crown all, I was welcomed to Delville by your dear letter of the 14th, a happy omen. On Sunday evening we removed from Chester to Park Gate, in hopes of sailing next morning early, but the wind was contrary, and we were obliged to remain there all Monday. On Tuesday we went on board the yacht. Though the wind was not very fair, the weather was so good that the captain said we might make our passage very well, which I thank God we did, and landed yesterday between eight and nine. We

did not come directly to Delville, it being so late, but packed away, bag and baggage, and went to Mrs. Fordel's, who expected us to lie at her house; she is a very well-bred, friendly, agreeable woman, and I was perfectly easy with her. On Tuesday the day was so fine that I sat on deck the whole day, and eat a very good dinner, and an egg for my supper, and worked and drew two or three sketches; nothing could be more pleasant, but we went slowly, not having wind enough. In the evening the weather grew more favourable for our sailing, but made the ship roll, and we were very ill all night, and the next day till about five, that they came to the cabin, and said we were just entering the bay of Dublin; upon which we got up, and were soon cured by the good weather and the fair prospect of landing.

'Every word of my dearest sister's letter touches my heart, and is most faithfully returned with sincerest love. Do not say I am "lost to you"; I cannot bear that expression, for I am everywhere yours. As soon as I examined my house to-day, I laid out an apartment for you, and I hope you will provide the same for me at Welsbourne. My love and blessing to the dear happy boy that flourishes under your charge.'

Mrs. Delany was evidently highly pleased with her new possessions, for in another letter she gives a minute account of the house, and paints the glories of her own apartments, the drawing-room hung with tapestry, the crimson mohair curtains and chairs, the large glasses with gilt frames, the marble tables and japan chests. 'I wish you just such a chariot as ours,' she writes on July 12, 'because I never went in so easy a one.' Then follows a more particular description of the house, with the sizes of all the principal rooms. The newly married couple were

chiefly occupied in receiving and paying calls, entertaining and being entertained, until the end of August, when they set out to take possession of their Deanery of Down. There was then no Deanery house, so they stayed at Mount Panther, a place about five miles from Down. On September 10, Mrs. Delany writes: 'Yesterday the Dean preached at Down, and we women went to the church of our poet, Dr. Matthews, two miles off. . . . D. D. is very busy in making a plan for the Deanery house. He is very much shocked at the present jail at Down, and is determined to have it altered, and to have one built with separate apartments for the men and women, and a chapel; he gives a hundred pounds towards it, and endows the chapel with twenty pounds a year for a clergyman to give them a service.'

On her return to Delville for the winter, Mrs. Delany found plenty to occupy her time, what with her social and domestic duties in addition to her artistic pursuits. Dublin has always been noted for its hospitality, and in the last century this seems to have taken the form of heavy dinners and suppers. The menu for one of the Delville dinners is a curiosity in its way, and may be transcribed for the benefit of modern housewives. It consisted of—

Turkeys endove.
Boyled leg of mutton.
Greens, etc.
Soup.
Plum pudding.
Roast loin of veal.
Venison pasty.

Partridge.
Sweetbreads.
Collared pig.
Creamed apple tart.
Crabs.
Fricassée of eggs.
Pigeons.
No dessert to be had.

The letters of this winter are chiefly of domestic interest, and treat of Dublin personages who are quite

unknown to fame. Sir John Stanley's death about Christmas time must have been a great shock to the niece who had spent so much of her time with him. Writing on January 3, Mrs. Delany says: 'What you say of Sir John Stanley is very just. I have the satisfactory consciousness of having acted a right part towards him; I have from my childhood received many favours, and to the day of my death I shall gratefully remember him; but my brother has had it more in his power to show his regard, and for many years we know he gave up the world for his sake, and I know he deserved to be more distinguished. Mr. Monck had not the manners to give my brother or me notice of Sir John's illness or death. He will be obliged to sell Northend; I wish it may be bought by somebody I love, but I would rather have it in possession of anybody than Mr. M.'

About the end of March the Delanys set out again for Down, remaining at Mount Panther until June, when they moved into Holly Mount, a house within easier reach of the town. On June 8, 1745, Mary writes to her mother:—

'Dearest Madam,—Though I did not expect it, the sight of your hand gave me a great deal of pleasure, and my sister must wait till next post, for I can no longer defer from making my best acknowledgments to you, madam, for the favour of yours; but you overwhelm me with shame when you make any acknowledgment of thanks to me; you make me feel how much more I owe you than I can ever pay; and all I can do is to take every opportunity of showing you I gratefully remember your goodness, though I am unable to make a sufficient return. . . . I don't at all doubt my sister's notableness;

I think she has blended in her composition, beyond anybody I know, the excellencies of a good economist and the elegance of a fine lady, without any of her foibles. . . .

'I gave my sister an account of our journey to Mount Panther, which is six miles from hence. We came here last Tuesday, and brought all the family with us, and found the house in very good order, and a good dinner ready. The house is very indifferent, but the situation pleasant. The Dean has agreed for the building of his new church, and is very busy visiting all the families in his Deanery, which will be a laborious work. It is very strange, but the poor here have been so neglected; they say they never saw a clergyman in their lives but when they went to church. . . .'

Writing to her sister a few days later, she observes: 'Never did any flock want more the presence and assistance of a shepherd than this Deanery, where there has been *a most shameful neglect*; and I trust in God it will be a very happy thing for the poor people that D. D. is come among them. The church of Down is very large, but it is not a quarter filled with people; the curate has been so negligent as never to visit any of the poor of the parish; and a very diligent and watchful dissenting minister has visited them on all occasions of sickness and distress, and by that means gained great numbers to the meeting. D. D. has already visited a great number; when he has been with all the Protestants, he designs to go to the Presbyterians, and then to the Papists; they bless him and pray for him wherever he goes, and say he has done more good already than all his predecessors. The last Dean was here but two days in six years! . . .

'As Down is three miles from hence, and we cannot go

to prayers in the afternoon if we dine at home, the Dean designs to dine every Sunday in Down. There is a public-house kept by a clever man who was butler to one of the deans; he has a very good room in his house, and is to provide a good dinner, and the Dean will fill his table every Sunday with all the townsmen and their wives by turns, which will oblige the people, and give us an opportunity of going to church in the afternoon without fatigue.

'We rise about seven, have prayers and breakfast over by nine. In the mornings D. D. makes his visits, and I draw; when it is fair, and he walks out, I go with him; we dine at two; in the afternoon when we can't walk out, reading and talking amuse us till supper, and after supper I make shifts and shirts for the poor naked wretches in the neighbourhood. . . .

'I am very sorry to find here and everywhere people out of character, and that wine and tea enter where they have no pretence to be, and usurp the rural food of syllabub, etc. But the dairymaids wear large hoops and velvet hoods instead of the round tight petticoat and straw hat, and there is as much foppery introduced in the food as in the dress,—the pure simplicity of the country is quite lost.'

In August the Delanys returned to Delville, and Mary writes: 'This place is now in perfect beauty, and the weather has been so fine that every hour of the day I could spare from business and meals has been spent in the garden, chiefly in *Pearly Dewes*' bower, where one of our tame robins welcomed us home, and flew to the Dean's hand for the bounty he used to bestow. I am very glad you do not expect me till spring; for as it is impossible for me to leave this place before October, I think it would be safer and better not to go till April. I am come home

to a hurry, and have found many things to settle in my household that all housekeepers are sometimes troubled with—servants, accusations that must be cleared and are very teasing, though I don't torment myself with those affairs; but as our family is large, and consequently expensive, it requires both my care and attention. . . .

'The yachts are to go this day for my Lord Lieutenant, so in a few days I suppose we shall have them. I design to make my first visit in an Irish stuff manteau and petticoat, and a *head* the Dean has given me of Irish work, the prettiest I ever saw of the kind. He has made me also a present of a repeating watch and a diamond ring; the diamond is a brilliant, but such gems are only valuable when they are testimonials of a kind and affectionate heart.'

At the time of their marriage Dr. Delany had promised his wife that she should pay a visit to her relatives in England every year if practicable. There had been some talk of a journey to England in the autumn of this year 1745, but the insurrection in Scotland made it unsafe to cross the seas. The 'ugly rebels,' as Mrs. Delany calls them, having apparently quite forgotten the former Jacobite sympathies of her own family, continue to cause her a good deal of anxiety, partly lest they should penetrate as far as Gloucester, partly lest they should interfere with her journey to England in the spring. In the course of October she writes to assure Mrs. Dewes that Ireland remains unaffected, and that though it had formerly been a place of great confusion and disturbance, people in general were very well disposed towards the present Government.

'My mind is now much better satisfied,' she observes, 'for we are now very well prepared for the rebels, the

Dutch troops and our own being landed, and the Duke by this, I suppose, being returned home. We have reason to fear a chastisement, as I believe there never was more impiety in the world than at this time; but I hope there may be ten righteous men found to save the city, and that our next accounts from England may bring us more comfortable news of all danger being past. . . . I own I am under no apprehension that a ragged, ill-disciplined, and irregular body of men, though pretty numerous, should stand long against our forces when they have once met, unless Providence design to chastise us for our impiety, which, indeed, is to be feared.'

On October 22, Mrs. Delany describes a visit with which Delville was honoured by the Lord Lieutenant and Lady Chesterfield: 'Yesterday they sent over early in the morning to know if we were disengaged, as they would breakfast. To work went all my maids, stripping covers off the chairs, sweeping, dusting, etc., and by eleven o'clock my house was as spruce as a cabinet of curiosities, and well disposed on their Excellencies, who commended and admired, and were as polite as possible. They came soon after eleven in their travelling coach. When breakfast was over, they made me play on the harpsichord, which I did with an ill grace. When that was done, we went into the garden, and walked over every inch of it; they seemed much surprised with the variety they found there, and could not have said more civil things had it been my Lord Cobham's Stowe. They staid till near two, and my Lord Lieutenant and the Dean had a great deal of conversation which I believe was mutually agreeable.

'Pray have you ever seen the four sermons that were published by Swift last year? They were very fine, and worth the reading. Have you read Bishop Sherlock's

sermon on the Rebellion? It is charming. There is just published a humorous pamphlet by Swift, I think it is called "Advice to Servants"; it is said to be below his genius, but comical. I wrote you word of his death. It was a happy release to him, for he was reduced to such a miserable state of idiotism that he was a shocking object, though in his person a very venerable figure, with long silver hair and a comely countenance; for being grown fat, the hard lines which gave him a harsh look before were filled up. . . .

'*November* 23.

'Never were people so earnest after news as we, and yet no news can we hear that may be depended on. The taking of Carlisle by the rebels is the last we have had; some lament it, others more polite say it will prove a trap to them. Pray God send us peace; but it seems removed far from us. I have not heard from my brother Granville a great while. Is it not a shame to say I hope he is not engaged in my Lord Gower's regiment? Should I not have a more martial and public spirit? If giving up my own life would save my country from ruin, I think I could do it, but to hazard a dear friend's at an uncertainty, I cannot bear, so I hope in God he is safe from any dark hazard. . . .

'On the Princess of Wales' birthday there appeared at Court a great number of Irish stuffs. Lady Chesterfield was dressed in one, and I had the secret satisfaction of knowing myself to be the cause, but dare not say so here; but I say, "I am glad to find my Lady Chesterfield's example has had so good an influence." The poor weavers are starving—all trade has met with a great check this year.'

In spite of the continued anxiety about the rebels, the

winter passed quietly and busily away for the good couple at Delville. Mrs. Delany occupied herself in making shell-work ornaments for her house and garden, reading the *Lives of the Admirals* and Sir Thomas Hanmer's edition of *Shakespeare*, copying a portrait of the Duchess of Mazarin, and attending a course of lectures on philosophy. *À propos* of the latter she writes: 'I am extremely pleased with the philosophy lectures, but am also cruelly disappointed. I hoped to have been made a wise woman by them, but, alas! they only serve to show my own ignorance. I am surprised that knowledge should make anybody vain; I think it rather serves to humble the mind, since to those who have drunk deepest of the draught of knowledge there must remain so many things unaccountable.'

In the early spring a daughter was born to Mrs. Dewes, who was named Mary, after her aunt. 'I would have her like me,' writes that lady, 'in everything that is worthy of your regard, but to endear her equally to me I wish most heartily that she may resemble my own dearest sister. You remember Madame de Sévigné: Mary must be my Pauline.'

The eagerness to see her niece, whom from the first she regarded as her 'own little girl,' naturally increased Mrs. Delany's anxiety to revisit England. Towards the end of May the couple set sail in the government yacht, and for the next five months the sisters had the happiness of being together at Wellesbourne, the country house to which the Dewes had lately removed from their first home at Bradley. The sisters seem to have been together until October, when the Delanys made a round of visits before going to town. The first was to Lord Cornbury, where Mary met again her old playfellow the Duchess of

Queensberry, who, she says, is most gracious and entertaining. After a long visit to 'the amiable Duchess' at Bulstrode, the Delanys settled down for the rest of the winter in a lodging in Pall Mall, where Mary soon found herself surrounded by her old friends, with the doors of the fashionable world open before her. On January 15, 1747, she writes: 'To-day I dine with the Claytons, and in the afternoon go to Lady Sunderland's. To-morrow I go to St. James's to pay my *devoirs* to the Duchess of Portland; dine at home; in the afternoon go to the Duchess of Norfolk, who is ill; to the Countess of Kildare; and finish at the Duchess of Queensberry's, who is to have a *hurricane*. On Sunday I go to Carlton House to pay my salutations to their Royal Highnesses, and in the afternoon to Mrs. Montagu. I go to-morrow in my Irish green damask and worked head; on the Birthday in a flowered silk on a pale deer-coloured ground — the flowers, mostly purple, are mixed with white feathers. I think it extremely pretty, and very modest. . . .

'I was, as I proposed, at Court yesterday, and was most graciously received. The King asked me how I liked Ireland, the Duke did the same. I dined at home, and in the afternoon my brother came; he looks grave, and lives much at home, though he is much courted for his company abroad.

'*January* 21.

'Yesterday we made our appearance at Leicester House. The Duchess of Portland was in white satin. She had all her fine jewels on, and looked handsomer than ever I saw her in my life, and in my eyes outshone in every respect all the blazing stars of the Court. There was not much finery, new clothes not being required on this Birth-

day. They curl, and wear a great many tawdry things, but there is such a variety in the manner of dress that I don't know what to tell you is the fashion; the only thing that seems general are hoops of an enormous size, and most people wear vast winkers to their heads. They are now come to such an extravagance in these two particulars, that I expect soon to see the other extreme of thread-paper heads, and no hoops. The reigning beauty, I think, among the very young things, is Lord Carpenter's daughter; and since Lady Dysart was fifteen, I have not seen anything so handsome; but the prize of beauty is disputed with her by Lady Emily Lenox. She is indeed like "some tall, stately tower," while the other is "some virgin queen's delicious bower." In the afternoon I made a visit to the Percivals and Lady Westmoreland. Coming out from her house, as soon as I got into my chair, the chairman fairly overturned it—fairly, I may say, for not a glass was broken, nor was I the least hurt. I own I was a little terrified, and Lord Westmoreland, hearing a bustle at the door, found me topsy-turvy. He insisted on my getting out of the chair, which I did, drank a glass of water, sat half an hour in his library, and went on to Lady Frances Carteret.

'*January* 29.

'As to what you propose of my coming to Wellesbourne, I will compromise the matter as well as I can. D. D. intends going to the Bath, but he is so good as to say that I can spend that time among my friends; so what I propose is to go directly to Gloucester, make a visit of a fortnight or three weeks there, and bring my mamma and your little boy to Wellesbourne. I cannot think of your hurrying yourself about, and I am sure Gloucester is not a place you will wish to visit when you have not an

indispensable call; but I must go there, for it would not be right towards my mother not to do it. God knows how long I may be permitted to pay her that duty; pray, was she not seventy-five the last birthday? . . . I think you are quite right to make a sack; they are easier and handsomer than any other dress for a lady in your circumstances; you may wear a sack with a mob under your chin if you please. Scotch caps are all the mode, and are worn by all ages; they are put on with a couple of pins, and that is a great recommendation for any dress.

'The Duchess of Portland was saying the other day that nobody had invited her to a drum, upon which I sent her ten cards in feigned hands—from Mrs. Guzzle in Swallow St., Mrs. May of Bloomsbury, Mrs. Spratt of Billingsgate, Mrs. Swift of Fleet St., Mrs. Alestub of Brewer St., Mrs. Plummer of Leadenhall St., and Mrs. Selwine of Sackville St. At first she could not tell what to make of such a rigmarole, but at last fixed it on Greene and the Duke.'

In May the Delanys, after a farewell visit to Wellesbourne, returned to their Irish home. The one drawback to Mary's happiness in her second marriage was the separation that it involved from her sister; and the letters from Chester, where some days had to be spent in awaiting the Government yacht, are written in a melancholy mood. 'Had our wheels been as heavy as my heart when I left Wellesbourne,' she writes, 'we should have made a tedious journey. To leave a friend one loves must at all times be painful; if anything can render it less so, it is the consolation of such a friend as bears me company, who not only thinks it reasonable for me to grieve, but himself sincerely grieves too.'

But Mary was not the woman to waste overmuch time

in vain regrets, and the first letters from Delville are pitched in a much more cheerful key. The house and gardens are described as being in perfect beauty, three beautiful young deer have been added to her stock, Tiger the cat knew her at once, and she has a very thriving cow and calf. Altogether, life was not without its compensations.

The chief event of the summer of 1747 was the death of old Mrs. Granville, who, tradition says, died on her knees in the act of saying her prayers. Her loss was very deeply felt by both her daughters, who were devotedly attached to her. It is not necessary to give any detailed account of the Delany *ménage* during the following year. The quiet life at Delville was alternated with visits to Down or to friends in the country. In August 1748 they stayed with their old acquaintances Bishop Clayton and his wife at the palace, Clogher, and explored the surrounding country; while in October they paid a more interesting visit to Dangan, Lord Mornington's place. Lord Mornington's only son, Garrett Wesley was, it will be remembered, the father of the great Duke of Wellington, and Mrs. Delany's godson. She writes from Dangan on October 15: 'This place is really magnificent; the old house that was burnt down is rebuilding. The gardens and park consist of six hundred Irish acres. There is a gravel walk from the house to the great lake, which contains twenty-six acres, and is of an irregular shape, with islands for wild-fowl. There are several ships, one a complete man-of-war. My godson is governor of the fort and Lord High Admiral; he hoisted all his colours for my reception, and was not a little mortified that I declined the honour of being saluted. . . . He [Master Wesley] is a most extraordinary boy; he was thirteen last month, he is a very good scholar,

Mrs Granville mother of Mrs Delany
from an engraving in the possession of
the Hon. Mrs Herbert of Llanover

and whatever study he undertakes he masters it most surprisingly. He began with the fiddle last year, he now plays everything at sight; he understands fortifications, building of ships, and has more knowledge than I ever met with in one so young. He is a child among children, and as tractable and complying to his sisters, and all who should have any authority over him, as the little children can be to you.'

CHAPTER X

(1749-1752)

In the spring of 1749 the Delanys paid their periodical visit to England, and during their stay the letters are naturally infrequent. The summer was spent at different country houses, and the winter in town, where Mrs. Dewes came to stay with her sister in February. There are no specially interesting allusions in the letters this winter, and in May the Delanys returned to Dublin. Mary writes on May 18: 'A year's absence makes it necessary to have a thorough inspection into everything, and I am settling my family in a different way from what it was formerly, which obliges me to be Mrs. Notable, and to do much more than I ever did in my life, and I hope it will agree with me.' In July they went as usual to Down for the summer months, returning to Delville in September.

Mrs. Delany's letters often contain accounts of the books she is reading, and her opinion of them. During this year she read *The Man of Honour*, *Guadentio di Lucca*, which was attributed to Bishop Berkeley, and *Roderick Random*; but the book which seems to have impressed her most, and to which she makes most frequent allusion, is *Clarissa Harlowe*. She was the more interested in this work, probably, because Richardson was an acquaintance and occasional correspondent of Anne Dewes.

MRS. DELANY

In the last century people found time, apparently, not only to read, but to re-read novels in eight volumes. In a letter dated October 1750, Mrs. Delany writes:—

'I am now as deeply engaged with *Clarissa* as when I first was acquainted with her, and admire her more and more. I am astonished at the author; his invention, his fine sentiments, strong sense, lively wit, and, above all, his exalted piety and *excellent design* in the whole. I find many beauties escaped me in my first reading; I was so much interested and run away with by the story that I did not give due attention to many delightful passages. I am just got to her triumph after his villainy; how poor and despicable a figure does he make upon their first meeting, and how noble and angelic is her appearance and behaviour! The contrast between flagrant guilt and injured, though unconquerable, innocence is most judiciously and beautifully drawn. My heart was almost broke with her frenzy, but that scene afterwards composed and revived my spirits, and made me almost rejoice in her distress.'

In this year Mrs. Delany received a petition from Mr. Ballard, a *littérateur* of some repute in his day, that she would allow him to dedicate to her the second part of his work, *Memoirs of Learned Ladies*. This consisted of short biographical sketches of literary ladies who flourished from the fourteenth to the eighteenth century, and was published by subscription. Mrs. Delany was most anxious to refuse the honour, but her husband persuaded her to consent, on the ground that the author would be deeply mortified by her refusal. 'I hate the sort of compliments an author thinks himself obliged to pay the person he dedicates to,' she writes to Mrs. Dewes, 'and the poor man will be distressed, for he will think himself *under a*

necessity to say fine things; so to ease him of further trouble, and myself some confusion, I *insist* on your sending the enclosed dedication to him, for I shall absolutely take it ill of him if he says anything in a higher strain.'

The following was the dedication composed by Mrs. Delany herself:—

'MADAM,—I am very much obliged to you for your indulgence in giving me leave to dedicate part of this work to you; and, as I am informed you were resolved against addresses of this nature, I will not tire you with encomiums on your family, your person, or your qualifications, as my intention in publishing the book is to raise the mind above the common concerns of this world; and I hope the examples here set before you will animate you to good and great actions, and then your obligation to me will be at least equal to mine to you.'

Mr. Ballard did not adopt this very sensible dedication, but published his work with the following much more commonplace inscription:—

'To Mrs. Delany, the truest judge and brightest pattern of all the accomplishments which adorn her sex, these *Memoirs of Learned Ladies* in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are most humbly inscribed by her obedient servant, GEORGE BALLARD.'

À propos of an allusion to some 'sugar-plum knotting' which Mrs. Delany promises to send her sister, Lady Llanover gives the following interesting account of some of the needlework which was executed in such vast quantities and such artistic fashion by the two sisters:—

'The editor has in her possession a set of covers for chairs,

made of linen of the most brilliant dark blue, which she has never been able to match. They are bordered with a beautiful pattern by Mrs. Delany of oak leaves, cut out in white linen, and tacked down with different sorts of knotting, which also forms the veining and the stalks. There are constant allusions in these letters to sending thread for knotting and to "sugar-plum knotting," which was used for the ornamental parts, being highly embossed. Mrs. Delany and her sister were in the habit of using their knotting-shuttles (as was the custom of the time) at those periods of relaxation when the German ladies use their knitting-needles, and the English ladies do nothing; and it is almost incredible the quantity of knotting, in various patterns and colours, which was left by Mrs. Delany, and which still exists, being the remains of the produce of tea-table leisure hours, although such a large supply was required for the works which she completed in this peculiar style.'

But Mrs. Delany found time in those elastic days for many other occupations besides needlework. 'I am going to make a very comfortable closet,' she writes in October 1750, 'to have a dresser, and all manner of working tools, to keep all my stores for painting, carving, gilding, etc., for my own room is now so clean and pretty that I cannot suffer it to be strewed with litter, only books and work, and the closet belonging to it to be given up to prints, drawings, and my collection of fossils and minerals. My storeroom fits only an idle mind that wants amusement; yours serves either to supply your hospitable table, or gives cordial and healing medicines to the poor and sick. Your mind is ever turned to help, relieve, and bless your neighbours, while mine, I fear, is too much filled with amusements of no real estimation; and when people

commend any of my performances, I feel a consciousness that my time might have been better employed. . . .

'*November* 17.

'I have begun a Madonna and Child for the chapel, which is a great undertaking. I have dead-coloured the two faces. . . . I am angry with you that you sent my letters to Mr. Richardson. Indeed, such careless and incorrect letters as mine are to you should not be exposed; were they put in the best I could put them into, they have nothing to recommend them but the overflowing of a most affectionate heart, which can only give pleasure to the partial friend they are addressed to. . . .'

The great interest that Mrs. Delany took in her sister's children, and more especially in little Mary, led her to bestow much thought upon the question of education, and there are several passages in the letters of this period that contain the results of her reflections upon this subject. In such matters she was no mild sentimentalist, but shared the opinions of the age in regard to a firm, though temperate system of discipline. In November 1750, when Mary was not quite five years old, she writes: 'I don't fear your prudence in the management of your children. Love, coupled with fear, are the bands that most confine them to what is right. A wrong and over-indulgent conduct of parents to their children is the greatest cruelty to them; for if they never meet with contradiction till they are of age to engage in the great concerns of life, how will they be able to sustain the contradictions, disappointments, and mortifications they must encounter in this world? But a perverse, injurious manner of contradicting and thwarting them, and very severe corrections for trifles, does them, I believe, as much harm as a uni-

versal indulgence. Happy are my dear children, who I hope are born to prove the golden mean: it is, I am persuaded, to a very tender mother the most self-denying principle to refuse that indulgence, but great is the virtue and strong the obligation laid on her to correct her child steadily and properly.'

In a later letter she continues: 'About Mary; it is of much consequence to men and women to receive all instructions early; I am sure as many years *after* they are sixteen is not so advantageous to them as so *many months* before that age. Very young minds are susceptible of very strong impressions; they have nothing of consequence to draw off their attention. As they grow older, and mix with company, the *whole crowd* of youthful vanities breaks in upon their minds, and leaves but little room for instruction. If Pauline prove handsome, which indeed I think she bids fair for, it is in vain to hope that she can be kept ignorant of it; all that the wisest friend can do for her is to teach her of how little value beauty is—how few years it lasts, how liable to be tarnished, and if it has its advantages, what a train of inconveniences also attend it; that it requires a double portion of discretion to guard it, and much more caution and restraint than in one that is not handsome.'

Mrs. Delany was probably thinking of her own agitating youthful experiences when she penned the above, as well as a subsequent passage on the subject of marriage. 'Why,' she demands, 'must a woman be *driven to the necessity of marrying?*—a state that should always be a matter of choice! And if a young woman has not fortune sufficient to maintain her in the station she has been bred to, what can she do but marry? And to avoid living either very obscurely or running into debt,

she accepts of a match with no other view but that of interest. Has not this made matrimony an irksome prison to many, and prevented its being that happy union of hearts where mutual choice and mutual obligation make it the most perfect state of friendship.'

During the winter of 1750-51 Mrs. Delany was employed in painting her Madonna, and also in making shell-flowers for the ceiling of the chapel. Her chief reading consisted of Carte's *Life of the Duke of Ormonde*, and *The Economy of Human Life*, which she thinks a very pretty book, all but the chapter on Love. On November 24, she is hoping to go to the rehearsal and the performance of Handel's *Messiah*, and adds: 'A new, and therefore favourite performer, Morella, is to play the first fiddle and conduct the whole. I am afraid his French taste will prevail; I shall not be able to endure his introducing froth and nonsense in that sublime and awful piece of music. What makes me fear this will be the case is that in the closing of the eighth Concerto of Corelli, instead of playing it clear and distinct, he filled it up with frippery and graces that quite destroyed the effect of the sweet notes and solemn pauses that conclude it.'

This fear proved to be unfounded, for in a letter to her brother a few weeks later, she says: 'I was at the rehearsal and performance of the *Messiah*; and though voices and hands were wanting to do it justice, it was very tolerably performed, and gave me great pleasure—'tis heavenly. Morella conducted it, and I expected would have spoiled it, but I was agreeably surprised to find the contrary; he came out with great applause. I thought it would be impossible for his wild fancy and fingers to have kept within bounds; but Handel's music inspired and awed him. He is young, modest, and well behaved, I am told;

and were he to play under Mr. Handel's direction two or three years, would make a surprising player. We are so fond of him here that were it known I gave this hint I should be expelled all musical society, as they so much fear he should be tempted to leave us.'

At Christmas she writes to her sister: 'D. D. employs me every hour in the day for his chapel. I make the flowers and other ornaments by candle-light, and by daylight, when I don't paint, put together the festoons that are for the ceiling, and after supper we play one pool at commerce. Our everyday reading is still Carte's *History of the Duke of Ormonde.* He is one of the greatest heroes I ever read of, such courage, prudence, loyalty, humanity, and virtues of every kind make up his character; but the sufferings of King Charles the First, though here but in part related, break one's heart. I think the periods too long; there is a repetition of facts that might have been avoided; and it is upon the whole rather tedious, but the subject is so interesting that it carries one along. Our Sunday reading is the *Minute Philosopher.* What a work of genius is that! How beautiful the style, and for sense and wit surely nothing can exceed it! I thought it at first reading more abstruse than I do now, though there are very few pages but what you will perfectly understand with close attention.'

In the letters for January 1751 there are allusions to the illness or deaths of two of Mrs. Delany's former lovers. 'I saw in the newspapers that Lord Baltimore is ill,' she writes. 'Is he dead? He had some good qualities; I wonder where his poor sister Hyde is; I wish he may have done something for her. I fear his poor children at Epsom have been sadly neglected. . . . Last Thursday satisfied all my desires, and brought me one of your

charming letters, and one from my brother, with an account of Lord Weymouth having left his sisters £4000 a piece. You should, and I suppose you did, wear mourning a fortnight for Lord Weymouth.

'*March* 16.

'On Monday, madam, I give a sumptuous ball! Seven couple of young things! Oh that my little dewdrops were here to hop with them! The ball begins at eleven in the morning, and is to last till half after two; then dinner, and if not tired an hour's dancing afterwards. I had the joy of your letter last Monday, as I was going to the town to buy mourning for the Prince of Wales. I sincerely lament his death. He had amiable qualities, and I pity the Princess of Wales excessively. She can have no friend to make up such a loss, and royalty is denied many comforts which subjects enjoy. The dignity of her station requires her to appear in, and receive crowds, when her mind is oppressed with sorrow which would rather seek the darkest shade.'

The summer passed in the usual quiet fashion, and winter and its gaieties came round again. It is very seldom that there is even a spark of malice or uncharitableness in Mrs. Delany's letters; but in one, dated November 2, 1751, she indulges in a little sarcasm at the expense of a neighbour, probably her old acquaintance, Mrs. Clayton. 'I suppose I must give you an account of the Birthday,' she writes. 'I went to Madam in my coach at twelve o'clock; she was in her sedan with her three footmen in Saxon green, with orange-coloured cockades, marched in state—I humbly followed. A stop kept me about half an hour on the way; she got to the castle without interruption, and went on to the drawing-room directly. Can you tell why she desired me to go

with her? I can. She was superb in brown and gold and diamonds; I was clad in the purple and white silk I bought last year in England, and my littleness set off her greatness! These odd fancies make me laugh and not a bit angry; only rather self-satisfied that I feel above doing the things that make others so despicable.'

Perhaps this same lady was in Mrs. Delany's mind when, in a letter written during the same month to the Duchess of Portland, she says: 'I am now a very old woman, though not yet threescore; but as to my knowledge of the little world that has come under my observation, I am convinced that the greatest happiness we can enjoy is to be able to command our temper—it is better to us than riches or honour, or even health; without it we suffer more pain and anxiety by our fretfulness than many distempers give us, and torment and vex everybody about us. Is not this true, my dearest Lady Duchess? It is conjecture in me, but in you certainty.'

About this time Mrs. Delany's favourite novelist, Mr. Richardson, was engaged upon *Sir Charles Grandison*, the book wherein he purposed to portray a man who should hold up as shining an example to his sex as Clarissa was supposed to have done to hers. 'I fear it will be a long time,' she writes, 'before Mr. Richardson's *good man* is produced, and I am afraid his health will suffer from his too close attention to it. He has undertaken a very hard task, which is to please *the gay and the good*, but Mrs. Donnellan says as far as he has gone he has succeeded wonderfully. . . . Donnellan commends Miss Mulso's letters, but does not so well like the young woman; that is, she admires her sense and ingenuity, but thinks her only second-rate as to *politeness of manner*; and that Richardson's *high admiration* for her has made him take

her as a *model* for his greatest characters, and that is the reason they are not really so polished as he takes them to be.' Miss Hester Mulso, a noted blue-stocking, married a son of Mrs. Delany's old friend, Sally Chapone, and produced in her *Letters to a Young Lady on the Improvement of the Mind* what was regarded as the standard work on female education of her time.

In the same year the publication by Lord Orrery of a *Life of Swift* filled the hearts of both the Delanys with indignation. Mary especially was, as she observes, made 'so angry at the unfriendly, ungenerous manner of Swift's being treated by one who calls him his friend that it quite prejudices me against the book, and casts a cloud over all its merit; every failing is exposed, every fault is magnified, every virtue almost either tarnished or concealed! I have not time to tell you my particular objections, which are indeed very numerous. But one thing I must observe, that Lord Orrery makes *no mention* of Swift's singular, wise, and extensive charities, yet calls himself his *friend*! He tells of his resentment, with the strongest reflection on his pride, at his sister's marrying a tradesman, but does not tell you he allowed her £25 a year to his death, yet calls himself his *friend*! He calls his being void of all envy "pride of his own superior talents," yet calls himself his *friend*. Such a friend that, Brutus-like, gives the deepest and surest wound. . . . I must write and provoke or entreat Sally [Mrs. Chapone] to take him in hand, and expose this coxcomb of a *friend*, as he presumes to call himself. . . . I am serious in what I say about Sally's answering this book, but she must be *for ever* concealed, and not discover the author to be a *woman*.'

In the end it was Dr. Delany himself who took Lord

Orrery in hand, and wrote an able answer to the *Life*, and a warm defence of his dead friend.

The year 1752, which should have been made happy by a visit to England, opened rather gloomily for the couple at Delville. Mary writes to her sister on January 3: 'I have often thought of late my lot most singularly happy, more so than is generally met with in this world of woe; a husband of infinite merit, and deservedly most dear to me; a sister whose delicate and uncommon friendship makes me the envy of all other sisters; a brother of worth and honour; and a friend in the Duchess of Portland, not to be equalled, besides so many other friends, that make up together the sum of my happiness. But what a debt have I to pay! I am truly sensible of my own unworthiness, and that all these advantages are not to be enjoyed without a considerable alloy; and as my inmost thoughts have ever been laid open to the sister of my heart, I must now unburden my mind. D. D.'s love to me, I think, is as unquestionable as any mortal love can be, and the generosity of his sentiments as well known; but he is most extremely harassed with his lawsuits, and another is commenced against him by a mistake committed on his side of a form at law by the Presbyteries—those querulous people! Thank God, his fortune is too good to suffer very considerably by these attacks, but suffer in some degree we must, and it is absolutely necessary we should act with caution and prudence till we are so happy as to get out of the jaws of the law—that beast of prey! There is murmuring at his not living more at his Deanery, and being absent so long from it when we go to England. This, you may believe, is very vexatious to me, as it is on my account he goes.'

The conclusion of the whole matter was that Mary

had made up her mind that it was her duty to give up the longed-for visit to England that year. It was a tremendous sacrifice; and her husband, knowing how much it meant to her, had not found the heart to suggest it to her, though it seemed almost impossible that he could leave home for so long a time while his affairs were in such a troubled state. This time of trial brought out the best qualities of both husband and wife. Dr. Delany suggested that his wife should go to England for a few months while he went alone to his Deanery at Down, but this unselfish proposal she resolutely rejected. Then, unknown to her, he wrote to Mrs. Dewes, urging in the kindest and most generous terms that she and her husband should come and spend the summer at Delville, bringing with them their little girl.

'These are the terms,' he explains, 'upon which I desire and expect you: I will send Mr. Gavan's coach and six from Chester for you, which shall set you down safe at Park Gate, where I will appoint the best vessel on the coast, the *Minerva*, with the civillest and soberest master, to meet you at your own day, and convey you hither before the 14th of May next (I trust in God) in safety, and in that season with little or no sickness.

'You must come at my expense—I will receive you upon *no other terms*—and then you shall go home *at your own*! I won't be at the expense of one penny to get rid of you! I insist on your staying with us at least three months, and shall be most heartily rejoiced and highly obliged for your staying as much longer as you can. . . . I have no more to add, but that if I live till to-morrow I shall be sixty-seven years old; and as I can't go to England this year, I leave you to make the *inference* and *application*; and shall only add for myself that if my

dear brother Dewes and you will grant me this request, I shall be to the last day of my life to both your most affectionate, faithful, and obliged brother, friend, and servant.'

But, alas! the journey to Ireland was looked upon as a tremendous undertaking in 1752, and the Dewes had four young children, as well as an estate to superintend, so that they felt obliged to decline Dr. Delany's invitation. When once the matter was finally settled, Mary seems to have borne the disappointment with her usual philosophy, and the letters soon regain their wonted cheerfulness, in spite of the lawsuits that were dragging their slow length along.

CHAPTER XI

(1752-1756)

THE theatre was always a popular institution in Dublin, and patronised by sober dignitaries of the Church as well as by the laity. 'Mrs. Woffington is much improved,' writes Mrs. Delany towards the end of January, 'and did the part of Lady Townley last Saturday better than I have seen it done since Mrs. Oldfield's time. Her person is fine, her arms a little ungainly, her voice disagreeable, but she pronounces her words perfectly well, and she speaks sensibly. Mr. Sheridan[1] is a *just* actor, but rather a dull one; he is going to give a play gratis to raise a sum of money to erect a monument to Swift. . . . We are reading Mr. Fielding's *Amelia*. Mrs. Donnellan and I don't like it at all; D. D. won't listen to it. It has a more moral design than appears in *Joseph Andrews* or *Tom Jones*, but has not so much humour; it neither makes one laugh or cry, though there are some very dismal scenes described, but there is something wanting to make them touching. Our next important reading will be *Betsy Thoughtless* [by Mrs. Heywood]; I wish Richardson would publish his *good man*, and put all these frivolous authors out of countenance. . . .

'*February* 15.

'Last Tuesday we dined at the Bishop of Elphin's; he

[1] Thomas Sheridan.

is the son of an Archbishop of Tuam who has published some very good works, one I believe you have read—*The Gentleman's Religion.* The Bishop of Elphin is one of our most considerable men, and has only one daughter, who will be a vast fortune, and is brought up like a princess; she is a fine young woman about nineteen; all the young men of consequence, they say, have already proposed, but her father declares he will listen to no proposal till she is twenty-one. We had a magnificent dinner, extremely well dressed and well attended, and a dessert the finest I ever saw in Ireland. The Bishop lives constantly very well, and it becomes his station and fortune, but high living is too much the fashion here. You are not invited to dinner to any private gentleman of a thousand a year or less that does not give you seven dishes at one course, and Burgundy and Champagne; and these dinners they give once or twice a week. I own I am surprised how they manage, for we cannot afford anything like it with a much better income than they.'

The lawsuit, which concerned some paper relating to the property of his first wife, that Dr. Delany, in the innocence or ignorance of his heart had destroyed, still occupied the Courts, and in July 1752 a decision adverse to the Dean was given; but the Lord Chancellor's decree settling the amount to be refunded was put off until the winter term, and meanwhile there were offers from the other side of a compromise. Later, the Dean appealed against the decision of the Dublin Court, and the judgment was reversed; but it is needless to follow this unfortunate affair in detail. Suffice it to say that it cost the Delanys much, not only in money, but in many years of anxiety and suspense. The necessity for retrenchment was the most trivial of its consequences in the eyes of Mrs.

Delany, but it was intolerable to her that the least shadow of a slur should be cast upon the fair name of her husband.

The summer passed uneventfully at Down; and after the return to Delville, Mrs. Delany writes: 'We are now in daily expectation of our sentence; I wish I could prevent D. D.'s anxiety on my account. I am perfectly well, and one consolation we have, which no malice of our enemies can destroy—a conscience perfectly clear of charge. Till our affairs are determined we keep quiet, and see only our particular friends. . . . I am much obliged to little Jacky for the first efforts of his genius as a painter, and have put his pretty sketch safely by. I am sorry you are not so pleased with riding double as single; it is warmer and safer, and I hope you will pursue it, as it certainly has always agreed with you. . . .

'Poor Handel! how feelingly must he recall the *total eclipse*.

> '"Total eclipse! no sun, no moon!
> All dark amidst the blazing noon!
> O glorious light! no charming ray
> To glad my eyes with welcome day;
> Why thus deprived thy prime decree?
> Sun, moon, and stars are dark to me."

You know, Handel became blind in 1751; I hear he has now been couched, and found some benefit from it.

'*December* 30.

'Now that we have had time to think over what passed on Saturday, it does not appear so bad as at first. [The Chancellor, previous to his final decree, ordered that an account should be taken of all the effects in the controversy, and this settling of accounts was expected to last over three or four years.] The necessary delay may

give time for some happy turn in our affairs; and though in appearance we are hardly dealt with, God of His infinite mercy may intend it for a blessing. As to loss of fortune, I trust we can very well bear that; and should they take *all* that came from Mrs. Tennison, we shall still have more left than a reasonable competency.'

The next year the long-deferred visit to England took place. Writing in May 1753, Mrs. Delany says: 'I had yesterday a letter from my brother. He proposed setting out from Calwich the next day, in order to be in London to meet me the latter end of June. I hope to be able to answer his challenge. Mrs. Donnellan has a spare room in her house for D. D. and me, and we shall accept her offer when we have rested and revived ourselves at dear Wellesbourne. My dearest sister, how fair and sunshiny everything looks when that is in prospect. . . .

'I must speak of my poor Lord Hyde, whose death has indeed shocked me extremely, though I hope and believe he was so good that it makes the sudden stroke less dreadful. I most heartily pity the Duchess of Queensberry; but if it gives her a serious and right way of thinking, the event, melancholy as it is, may prove a happiness to her; and as she has good sense and many good qualities, I hope she will make a proper use of this great chastisement. If I could write an eulogium as elegantly as Madame de Sévigné, I should not quit this subject till I had done justice to the excellencies of Lord Hyde; I can only admire and love his memory. . . .

'There is nothing I wish so much for Mary, next to right religious principles, as a proper knowledge of the polite world. It is the only means of keeping her safe from an immoderate love of its vanities and follies, and of giving her that sensible kind of reserve which great

retirement converts either into awkward sheepishness or forward pertness.'

In July the Delanys are in town for a short time to consult Lord Granville[1] and other influential friends about the appeal in their lawsuit, and then the sisters spent four happy months together at Wellesbourne and Cheltenham. In November Mrs. Delany writes from Bulstrode, where she found the Duchess of Portland and her daughters engaged on a variety of ingenious works. 'Her daughters,' writes Mary, 'are as sweet and engaging as possible; Lady Elizabeth and Lady Henrietta are very lively and easy in manner, and under no further restraint before the Duchess than to watch her looks and motions, and instantly to obey them. Lady Margaret is more silent and reserved, but there is something very gentle and sensible in her look, and I hope she will grow; Lord Titchfield has a great reputation at school, and he behaves himself very well in every respect; Lord Edward is a lovely child, but shows not the same genius to learning his brother does. . . .'

There is a good deal in the letters about the Duchess's improvements in house and grounds, about her wonderful menagerie, and most of all about Richardson's latest masterpiece, which had lately appeared. 'I am all impatience for you to read *Sir Charles Grandison*,' writes Mrs. Delany on November 20. 'Oh, how you will admire him! but I dare not particularise anything for fear of forestalling; I have only read two volumes; don't tell me your opinion further than that till I have read more.'

The sisters were evidently enjoying the book at the same time, and they must have read quickly, for on December 3 Mary writes again—

'And now for Sir Charles; we have talked about the

[1] Lord Carteret became Earl Granville in 1744.

beginning, and agree in our opinion. From the time that Sir Charles rescues Harriet, the story and characters rise, his hero is as *faultless* as mortal hero can be: I *wish*, indeed, we *could match him*; there is grace and dignity in everything he says and does. No wonder, with the addition of so high an obligation as that of saving her from the vile Sir Hargreave, Harriet's heart should be so deeply engaged; how natural are all her doubts and apprehensions! . . . Emily's innocence and childishness make an agreeable variety, but she *ought not* to have been in love! She was too young to be won by the shining virtues of her guardian; they should rather have given her an awe for him as a parent, unless he had not been the man he was, and had courted her love, for he treats her as a favourite child. . . . As to the Italian story, it is one of the finest things I ever read in my life; was ever such a superb family described? What a divine creature Clementina! What a madness hers! Was ever Christian fortitude put to a greater trial considering her religion? And great as Sir Charles is, Clementina has a superiority over him; his distress is touching to the last degree, but everywhere he keeps up his character nobly. . . . The style is better in most places than that of *Clarissa*, but nothing can ever equal that work.'

The only blot upon Sir Charles's character, in Mrs. Delany's opinion, was the fact of his consenting to have his daughters brought up Catholics. 'Had a woman written the story,' she observes, 'she would have thought the *daughters of as much consequence as the sons*, and when I see Mr. Richardson, I shall call him to account for that *faux pas* ; but, on the whole, it is a most excellent book, calculated to please and inform all ages.'

In January 1754 the Delanys took lodgings in Suffolk

Street, and on the 29th Mrs. Delany writes: 'On Saturday the Dean was perfectly well, only complained of a weakness and watering in his left eye. We dined at home, and in the afternoon I went to see Mrs. Donnellan. On my return the Dean was just as I left him; when I met him at breakfast his left eye was much fallen, and his mouth drawn a little awry. I immediately apprehended what it was; but as he did not perceive it himself, I was loath to take notice of it; and as he had promised to read prayers to Mrs. Donnellan, I sent to Dr. Heberden, her physician, to meet us there. The Dean read prayers very well, but his voice was not quite clear, which he took notice of himself; and in looking in the glass saw what indeed had terrified me to such a degree that I hardly knew what I did. I thank God no bad symptom has increased; he was cupped on Sunday night, and had a perpetual blister laid on, and takes valerian and other mixtures. It is undoubtedly an attack of the palsy, but everybody assures me it was as slight as such an attack could be, and that by such early care I need not doubt his recovery. The law matters are now as nothing to me! My whole mind is set on the care of his health.'

Fortunately, the disease soon yielded to treatment, and Mary had the comfort of her sister's presence during this period of anxiety. In May Mrs. Dewes returned to Wellesbourne, and Mrs. Delany writes: 'Though I hope to follow my dearest friends soon, I could not part with them without the utmost reluctance. My dear and most amiable sister came to me when my heart was full of woe and gave me consolation. Many things happened when you were here to alarm and distress you, and is it not true that the obligation is all on our side? I thank God the scene has now changed for a more hopeful and cheering one.'

There was a probability of an appeal against the decision in the lawsuit; and as Dr. Delany's presence was required in England, it was decided that he and his wife should go to Ireland for the summer months, and return to London in the autumn. They set out in June, taking with them Sally Chapone the younger, Mrs. Delany's god-daughter, as well as the *Rambler* and the *Adventurer* to entertain them on their journey. In October they were back at Bulstrode, and from thence went to Whitehall, where they stayed until they could take possession of a house in Spring Gardens, which Dr. Delany had bought and presented to his wife. On November 10 Mrs. Delany writes: 'Mrs. Donnellan has been so full of our Brunette's [Sally Chapone] ungrateful behaviour to Mr. Richardson and his family that she talks of nothing else. How well my dear sister observes on her want of true humility. God grant it to her, for the best medicine in the apothecary's shop cannot be of so much use to her as that would be to her mind and body. Mr. Richardson was with me yesterday, and I expostulated with him on Sally's account; he is really very angry, but *kindly* so; and if she writes a kind letter of excuse to Mr. Richardson, and soon after to Miss Patty, all will be well. It is only a kind of jealous fit; how that little fiend, jealousy, torments the best minds sometimes; but perfect generous love surely casteth out jealousy as well as fear. . . .

'Yesterday, after chapel, the Duchess brought Lady Coventry [one of the beautiful Gunnings] to feast me, and a feast she was. She is a fine figure, and vastly handsome, notwithstanding a silly look sometimes about her mouth; she has a thousand airs, but with a sort of innocence that diverts one. Her dress was a black silk sack, made for a large hoop, which she wore without one,

and it trailed a yard on the ground; she had on a cob-webbed lace handkerchief, a pink satin long cloak, lined with ermine mixed with squirrel skins; on her head a French cap that just covered the top of her head, of blond, that stood in the form of a butterfly, with its wings not quite extended, frilled sort of lappets crossing under her chin, and tied with pink and green ribbon—a head-dress that would have charmed a shepherd! She has a thousand dimples and prettinesses in her cheeks, her eyes a little drooping at the corners, but fine for all that. . . . Lord Dartmouth has just been to see me, and engaged me to visit his lady. I said I thought myself too old to visit *young ladies*; he laughed at me, and said, "Try, and if she don't like you, I hope I may keep up my acquaintance with an old friend I like so much." *He is Sir Charles Grandison!* How charming is politeness! His ways are just his mother's.'

The new house was a great source of interest and pleasure, and Mrs. Delany was eagerly looking forward to the time when she might receive her sister and brother-in-law within her own walls. 'The house is small,' she writes, 'but very pretty and convenient, and in a delightful situation. If I don't fill my letter with "my house," you may be obliged to me. . . . It is pleasant to be possessed with things that please one; it is like viewing a fine picture through a magnifying glass—one enjoys every part of it. I was not born to be a philosopher; Nature has not thrown in enough indifference in my composition, nor has art attained it; in short, I *like*, *love*, and *dislike* with all my might, and the pain it sometimes costs me is recompensed by the pleasure.'

At Christmas the whole party were at Bulstrode, when smallpox broke out, Lord Edward Bentinck, the second

son of the house, being the first victim. Ideas on the subject of infection and quarantine were primitive enough, the more so because smallpox was regarded very much as measles are in our own day, that is, as a disease which few can hope to escape, and which it is as well to get over in early youth. The three young daughters were given their choice, to stay where they were, or go to Whitehall, and they all begged to stay, declaring that they should be miserable at leaving their mother. No attempt was made to prevent the spread of infection, and the three girls took the disease, one after the other. All recovered in time, though their complexions suffered, in spite of the application of a decoction of rotten apples recommended by Mrs. Dewes. At this time inoculation was occasionally practised, but it was regarded as a risky operation, and was frequently attended with fatal results.

By the beginning of February all were well again, and Mrs. Delany is able to send other news than that of the sickroom. 'The prettiest story I heard of the masquerade at Somerset House,' she writes, 'was of Miss Allen, Lady Carysfort's sister, who is a lively sort of a fairy, not very conversant with the gay world, and never goes to Court; she was at the masquerade, and had never seen Lady Coventry; it was at the time that many were unmasked, but she had her mask on. She went to Lady Coventry, and looking at her very earnestly, said, "I have heard a great deal of this lady's beauty, but it far surpasses all I have heard." "What," said Lady C., "did you never see me before?" A young man that stood by said to the mask, "Are you not an Englishwoman?"—"I don't know whether I may not be called an Englishwoman, but I am just come from New York upon the fame of this lady, whose beauty is talked of far and near,

and I think I came for a very good purpose." Many lively entertaining things Miss Allen said on the occasion. Lady Coventry walked off, but the young man would not part with Miss Allen, and said, "Come, pull off your mask; I must see who has entertained us so well," and made her sit down. "Hands off," said she, for he offered to take her mask; "you know that 's impertinent." Lady Carysfort beckoned to her, and said, "Do you know it is Prince Edward[1] you are talking to?" Miss Allen, in great confusion, thought it was best not to seem to know, and by degrees disengaged herself; but when she had pulled off her mask he had watched her, and came up and took her by the hand, and asked her if she knew the supper-room. She said she did not, upon which he led her through three rooms, everybody making way; and when they came to the supper-room, he addressed himself to the chief of the company, and desired "that young lady might be particularly taken care of, and that he was extremely sorry he was obliged to sup in another party," and retired, without making discovery of himself to her. Was not that pretty and polite?'

In March 1755 Mrs. Delany was at last established in her own house in Spring Gardens, where she had the pleasure of a visit from her sister. The return to Ireland was again postponed, and in the summer the two sisters were together at Bath. In November Mrs. Delany writes from Longleat: 'Lord Weymouth[2] met us at the door, and said immediately, "Where is Mrs. Dewes?" He is perfectly polite and easy in his own house, very conversable and cheerful; you would think he had been master of the house for years instead of for

[1] Second son of Frederick, Prince of Wales.

[2] The son of her old admirer.

weeks. Whoever is to be the happy mistress of Longleat will have a very fair lot. I was quite overcome on seeing Lady Weymouth's picture in her Spanish dress; I could not help calling to mind what mirth, what happiness seemed to surround her the last time I was in this house. She was good and innocent, and no doubt is now in a happy state. I hope her son will soon recover the splendour of his house in every respect.'

In December the letters contain many details of the terrible earthquake at Lisbon, which was generally looked upon as a Divine judgment. 'Is it possible,' writes Mrs. Delany, 'such terrible distresses can be read without some awful thoughts? Can those wretches at White's read them like common paragraphs of news? Surely no, at least it is to be hoped they cannot; and yet I fear those who stand least in need of such warnings are most touched by them.' From a friend, whose business partner was among the survivors, she learns that 'the dreadful shrieks and agony of the people were most heartrending; thousands were crushed to death in the churches, and those who had often taken refuge there as murderers were crushed in the ruins. . . . The earth did *not open*, but the houses were thrown down by the trembling of the earth; and the conflagration which lasted till the whole city was destroyed was occasioned by violent lightning, and not fires in the houses, as they have all stucco floors.'

The month of December was spent at Bath, where Mrs. Delany was ordered to drink the waters. Among the visitors was the great Lord Chesterfield, who had lately had an attack of apoplexy, owing, it was supposed, to the anxious life he had led among gamesters. 'Whatever effect it (gaming) may have had upon his constitution,' observes Mrs. Delany, 'it is a severe reproach and

blemish to his character as a man possessed of superior talents to most of his sex, so good an understanding, such brilliancy of wit, so much discernment in seeing the foibles of others, and when he thought his example of consequence (as when Lord Lieutenant of Ireland), so great a command of himself for nearly a whole year. Is it not strange that he should fall a sacrifice to that desperate vice gaming?'

In January 1756 we hear a great deal about the splendours of the Granvilles' cousin, Mr. —, afterwards Lord —— Spencer, and his bride. After a detailed account of the glories of the young wife's finery and jewels, Mrs. Delany continues: 'All these things I have just seen at Mrs. Spencer's, who looked at them with the greatest unconcern, though not insensible to their merit as fine of their kind, and pretty things, but as the least part of her happiness. A begging letter was given to her at the same time which brought tears into her eyes, and made her appear with much more lustre than the diamonds. Her jointure, I hear, is four thousand a year. I don't know what her pin-money is, I suppose in proportion to everything Mr. Spencer has done, which has shown his nature to be good and generous. Lady Cowper says he may spend thirty thousand a year without hurting himself. There were magnificent things at Althorpe and nobody could have acquitted himself with more dignity, or given more universal content than Mr. Spencer did. When his birthday came he told Mrs. Pointz it was his firm resolution to make Miss Pointz his wife as soon as he was master of himself; that now he was, he entreated her leave to be married next day. You may imagine the request was granted; and it was so managed that nobody in the house, though near five hundred people, knew any-

thing of the matter but Lord and Lady Cowper, Mrs. Pointz, and her eldest son, and it was not declared till the Saturday after. On the 20th of December, after tea, the parties necessary for the wedding stole by degrees from the company into Lady Cowper's dressing-room, where the ceremony was performed, and they returned different ways to the company again, who had begun dancing, and they joined with them. Afterwards they retired to their different apartments. Miss Pointz and her sister lay from their first going to Althorpe in the best apartment, and Miss Louisa resigned her place on this occasion. The French waiting-woman, an old prude, who was not let into the secret (and was, I suppose, sent to bed, the girls saying they would attend upon themselves), was so shocked the next morning when she went in to open the windows on seeing Mr. Spencer put his head out of the curtains, and ask what o'clock it was, that she ran roaring and crying to Mrs. Pointz, and told her, "You see what you have got by delaying this marriage; my young lady is undone." Mrs. Pointz teased her a little while, then told her the truth, and the marriage was not known till the Saturday following. They have been most graciously received at Court, so there is as much happiness in that family as mortal heart can contain.'

Mrs. Delany also relates how the young couple came up to town from Althorpe in three coaches and six, accompanied by two hundred horsemen. The villages through which they passed were thrown into the greatest alarm by this cavalcade, some of the people shutting themselves in their houses, and others coming out armed with pitchforks, spits, and spades, crying that 'the invasion was come,' believing that the Pretender and the King of France were both come together.

That Mrs. Delany still took a keen interest in the fashions is evident from the earnestness with which she explains that 'ruffles are much the same—long at the elbow, and pretty narrow at the top. I think they pin their gowns rather closer than before; hoops are as flat as if made of pasteboard, and as stiff, the shape sloping from the hips and spreading at the bottom, enormous, but not so ugly as the square hoops. There are *hopes* that they will soon be reduced to a very small size. Heads are variously adorned, pompons with some accompaniment of feathers, ribbons, or flowers; lappets in all sorts of curli-murlis; long hoods are worn close under the chin, the earrings go round the neck [!], and tie with bows and ends behind. Night-gowns are worn without hoops.'

CHAPTER XII

(1756-1766)

THE whole of 1756 was spent in England. In September the Delanys went to Welbeck for the first time, and Mrs. Delany describes the place as 'really magnificent, though the outward appearance of the house is by no means answerable to its goodness within. There is a lawn before the house, encompassed with woods of the finest oak I ever saw. A valley of many acres runs through that part of the park that is visible from the house; it is to be floated, and will make a noble piece of water. I have undertaken to set the Duchess of Portland's miniatures in order, as she does not like to trust them to anybody else. Such Petitots! such Olivers! such Coopers! You may believe the employment is not unpleasant.'

The early part of the winter was passed at Bath and Bristol, and the sisters were together in town between January and May. In March 1757 the following quaint advertisement appeared, announcing the publication of *The Humanist*, a paper on the same lines as the *Spectator*, which Dr. Delany proposed to edit:—

'*This is to give notice*

To all those few frugal and temperate ladies and gentlemen who can afford to sequester ten minutes in a week from pleasurable pursuits and important amusements,

'That on Saturday the 26th (and on every succeeding Saturday) will be published a new paper called

THE HUMANIST,

Which means not only amusement, like the rest of its contemporaries, but likewise something more than mere amusement; and is calculated to convey some little useful and entertaining knowledge of various kinds, historical, classical, natural, moral, *and now and then a little religious*, into the reader's mind. The author is much concerned that this cannot be done under the great expense of twopence a week, for reasons that shall be known hereafter. Whether the advantages of such a paper will countervail the expense, the readers will judge for themselves.'

Apparently the judgment of the reader was unfavourable to the paper, which, perhaps, was overweighted by its religious matter, for it only survived fifteen numbers. Among its contents were a series of edifying female character-studies, which were intended to serve as a good example to women readers. A sketch of a faultless being called 'Maria' was a portrait of Mrs. Delany, but when she discovered it she forbade its publication. It was not destroyed, however, and serves to show the light in which her husband regarded her.

'Maria,' we are told, in the quaint language of the period, 'was early initiated into every art, with elegance and condition, that could form her into a fine lady, a good woman, and a good Christian. She read and wrote two languages correctly and judiciously. She soon became a mistress of her pen in every art to which a pen could be applied. She wrote a fine hand in the most masterly manner, she drew, and she designed with amaz-

ing correctness and skill. . . . With a person finely proportioned, she had a lovely face of great sweetness set off with a head of fair hair, shining, and naturally curled, with a complexion which nothing could equal, in which the lilies and roses contended for the mastery. Her eyes were bright—indeed, I could never tell the colour they were of, but to the best of my belief they were what Solomon calls "dove's eyes," and she is almost the only woman I ever saw whose lips were scarlet and her bloom beyond expression.'

In March 1758 the hearing of the appeal in Dr. Delany's long-protracted lawsuit took place in the House of Lords. The Attorney-General had been retained by the Dean, and opened the case in a speech of two hours' length. The hearing lasted over several days, during which the worthy couple suffered torments of anxiety and suspense; but on March 6 Mrs. Delany was able to write: 'My dearest sister's most kind and *prophetic* letter came just as we had received the happy news of the complete success of our cause. . . . The Dean's character is cleared, and set in the fair light it deserves. I am just come from early chapel, where I have every morning implored the blessing now received, but with a heavy heart, fearing my own demerits, and not daring to hope for success; but this morning I have attended with very different sensations, and may I ever be most humbly thankful. A cause never was so well attended, nor a more universal joy seen than when Lord Mansfield,[1] after an hour and a half's speaking with angelic oratory, pronounced the decree in our favour.'

The suit had lasted nearly ten years in all, and had cost the Delanys more than the disputed sum in law expenses, to say nothing of the wear and tear of suspense

[1] The 'silver-tongued Murray.'

and anxiety. A compromise might have been arrived at long before had it not been for Mrs. Delany's desire that her husband's character should be fully cleared, no matter what the cost.

After their long absence the Delanys returned to Ireland in July 1758, and Mrs. Delany's first letter from Delville is full of the delights of her garden, which, she says, she has not yet been able to visit in every part, although 'a snail can creep round it in a minute,' alluding to the satirical description of Delville attributed at first to Swift, but afterwards believed to have been written by Sheridan—

'Would you that Delville I describe?
Believe me, sir, I will not gibe;
For who would be satirical
Upon a thing so very small;
You scarce upon the borders enter
Before you 're at the very centre.
A single crow can make it night,
When o'er your farm she takes her flight.
Yet in this narrow compass we
Observe a vast variety;
Both walks, walls, meadows, and parterres,
Windows, and doors, and rooms, and stairs,
And hills, and dales, and woods, and fields,
And hay, and grass, and corn it yields.
All to your haggard brought so cheap in,
Without the mowing or the reaping;
A razor, tho' to say 't I 'm loth,
Would shave you and your meadows both.
Tho' small 's the farm, yet here 's a house
Full large to entertain a mouse;
But where a rat is dreaded more
Than savage Caledonian boar;
For if it 's entered by a rat,
There is not room to swing a cat.

A little rivulet seems to steal
Down through a thing you call a vale,
Like tears adown a wrinkled cheek,
Like rain along a blade of leek;
And this you call your sweet meander,
Which might be sucked up by a gander,
Could he but force his nether bill
To scoop the channel of the rill.
For sure you 'd make a mighty clutter
Were it as big as city gutter.
Next come I to your kitchen garden,
Where our poor mouse would fare but hard in;
And round this garden is a walk,
No longer than a tailor's chalk;
Must I compare what space is in it,
A snail creeps round it in a minute.
One lettuce makes a shift to squeeze
Up thro' a tuft you call the trees;
And once a year a single rose
Peeps from the bud, but never blows,
In vain, then, you expect its bloom,
It cannot blow from want of room!
In short, in all your boasted seat,
There 's nothing but yourself that 's great.'

There is not much of importance to record during the next year or two, but a few characteristic extracts from the letters may be given. 'I am quite of your mind about marrying,' writes Mrs. Delany in March 1759. 'I should be very sorry to have Mary married before she was twenty; and yet if a very desirable match offers sooner, I don't see how it can be refused, if she *must* marry *at all?* *À propos*, we dined last night at Mrs. Clayton's; she was very lively. After dinner the discourse ran upon women being single; she said it was a foolish scheme, for after forty it was awkward because they were insignificant, and she spoke with great con-

tempt of them. I was angry at the indignity, and said, but with great calmness, "I wonder you should say so; for who makes a better figure than your sister Donnellan, whose drawing-room is constantly filled with the best company, and whose conversation is much sought after?" It would have diverted you to see how blank she looked. "Oh, but," she added, "they grow jealous and suspicious." "Not at all," said I, "unless they were inclined to it when young."'

Mrs. Delany's mind was evidently rather exercised on the 'woman question' just then, for in the next letter she writes of her godson, Lord Mornington's *fiancée*, Miss Hill: 'She is pretty, excessively good-natured, and happy in her present situation; but I own I think my godson required a wife that knew more of the punctilios of *good breeding*, as he is much wanting in them himself, and those things should *not* be wanting in a man of rank and fortune. Indeed, I carry it further, and think that nobody can do so much good in the world who is not well bred as those that are; in truth, it is only a modern phrase for that "charity" emphatically expressed by St. Paul. Yet refining is of little use where the wife is only considered as a head-servant in the family, and honoured with the head of the table that she may have all the trouble of carving, as well as the care of supplying that table, so that her lord may not descend to any domestic drudgery. Our Maker created us "helpmeets," which surely implies we are worthy of being their companions, their friends, their advisers, as well as they ours.'

In April 1759 Handel, whom Mrs. Delany had never ceased to regard as her friend and most revered master, died at the age of seventy-five. 'I could not help feeling a damp on my spirits,' she writes, 'when I heard that

great master of music was no more, and I shall be less able to hear any music than I used to be. I hear he has showed his gratitude and regard to my brother by leaving him some of his pictures. . . . I am sure you were pleased by the honours done him by the chapter at Westminster.'

There was always a solid book of some kind for the evening readings at Delville. At one time it is Robertson's *History of Scotland*, and at another Mrs. Carter's *Epictetus*, and a translation of the *Tragedies of Sophocles*. Of the latter Mrs. Delany observes naïvely: 'They are in good, unaffected language. There is something of a noble simplicity in them, not so ranting, but more natural than our modern tragedies, and it is very agreeable to see how poets wrote above a *thousand years ago*; though there is vanity wanting to make them agreeable to our stage, where we have been used to more complicated plots and surprises, but I believe these are in truer taste.'

In April 1760 she writes of a certain book that was making a great noise in the world just then: 'The Dean is indeed very angry with the author of *Tristram Shandy*, and those who do not condemn the work as it deserves; it *has not* and *will not* enter this house, especially now your account is added to a very bad one we had heard before.' Again, in a subsequent letter she alludes to the obnoxious book: 'D.D. is not a little offended with Mr. Sterne; his book is read here as in London, and diverts more than it offends. As neither I nor any of my particular set have read it, I know no more of it than what you have said about it.'

In September 1760 the Delanys went to England again, and in October, the month in which George II. died, settled down in Bath for the winter. From thence a short visit was paid to Lord and Lady Weymouth [1] at Longleat, where, to

[1] Lord Weymouth married Lady Elizabeth Cavendish-Bentinck in 1759.

quote Mrs. Delany, '*the gardens are no more*!' They are succeeded by a fine lawn, a serpentine river, wooded hills, gravel paths meandering round a shrubbery, all modernised by the ingenious and much-sought-after Mr. Brown. It was at Bath that Mrs. Delany had her first sight of Mr. Gainsborough's pictures. 'This morning,' she writes in October, 'I went with Lady Westmoreland to see Mr. Gainsborough's pictures, and they may well be called what Mr. Webb *unjustly* says of Rubens—they are "*splendid impositions.*" There I saw Miss Ford's picture—a whole-length, with her guitar, a most extraordinary picture, handsome and bold; but I should be very sorry to see any one I loved painted in such a manner.'

It was about this time, the close of the year 1760, that Mrs. Delany began to suffer anxiety on account of the health of her sister, who had become subject to alarming fits of giddiness. In January 1761 the Delanys joined Mrs. Dewes at Bristol, where she had been ordered to take the waters, and remained with her until her rapidly-increasing weakness ended in her death on July 6, 1761. No letters of Mrs. Delany's relating to this period of overwhelming grief and desolation have been found; but among the family papers is a little note from Mr. Dewes to his young daughter Mary, which is curious as a specimen of the formal and purposely unemotional composition of an eighteenth century parent in time of affliction. There is no reason to doubt Mr. Dewes's affection for his wife, or his grief at her loss, but the power, and perhaps the will, to express deep, unaffected feeling was not over common at this period:

'My dear Mary,' begins this letter of condolence, 'I am but poorly qualified at present to console you upon the great loss you have sustained in the death of the best of

mothers; and though, upon the whole, I think my loss the greatest, and am but too sensibly affected with it, yet, as a parent, something may be expected from me upon so great a catastrophe. Let me therefore advise you not to dwell too much upon the melancholy subject, but rather be *thankful* that a life so worthy of imitation has been so long continued to you, and endeavour to follow her bright example. This will be a comfort to yourself and friends here, and a means of promoting your eternal happiness hereafter. . . .'

With the death of Anne Dewes, the intimate sisterly correspondence comes perforce to an end; but as soon as the first violence of her grief is over, Mrs. Delany begins to write regularly to her niece Mary, and to relations or old friends, such as the Duchess of Portland, Lady Cowper, Lady Gower, and Mrs. Boscawen, the latter being one of the shining lights of the blue-stocking circle. After a visit to Mr. Granville at Calwich, the Delanys returned to Delville in the winter of 1761-62, and here Mrs. Delany had the companionship of her goddaughter Sally Chapone, who was married in 1764 to the Dean's chaplain, Mr. Sandford. Mary Dewes was just entering society under the wing of Lady Cowper, and Mrs. Delany's letters contain much excellent advice to the niece, whom now more than ever she regarded as her own child. In 1762 she writes to Mary:—

'Our governor leaves us on Monday. Mrs. Osborne rejoices, the young ladies mourn, for they are so *very* young as to think a round of hurrying pleasures is *happiness*; not considering what a loss of time it is to devote *all* their hours to amusements that can leave no solid pleasure behind, wear their constitutions out by bad hours, and prevent all occupations that enlarge the mind and lay in a store of good and entertaining reflections for the

autumn and winter of life. A moderate participation in rational entertainments is necessary, I may say, to relieve the mind, but they should be no more the principal attention of our minds than sweetmeats should be our sole food. I don't mean any reflection on the Lady Montagues, for their station here has required them to lead the life they have done, and they have acquitted themselves with a great deal of civility and good-humour; but I only condemn the choice of spending *every day* in a public place, though I don't fear this disposition in you, my dear child, because you have early had great advantages, and the good seed that has been sown will spring up, and you will reap the advantage of it. Has my brother read Fingal, the Erse poetry? and how do you both like it? It is melancholy, but I think very pretty. We have lately read again Pliny's *Letters*, translated by Melmouth; they are very pleasing letters.'

Mrs. Delany writes her niece a long and cheerful account of the Chapone-Sandford wedding, the festivities at which lasted from eleven in the morning till ten at night, and included breakfast after the ceremony; dinner, with a Gargantuan menu, at four; tea and coffee at seven, then dancing and cribbage, prayers, a salver with bride-cake in the parlour, and a quiet supper after the company had departed. Such a day would be the death of almost any modern hostess, but Mrs. Delany writes as though the duties of housekeeping and hospitality were a pleasure rather than a burden.

Except for a short visit to England in 1763, the Delanys remained quietly at Delville till 1767, when a threatened renewal of the lawsuit filled them with anxiety, and decided them, in spite of the Dean's fast-failing health, to risk the journey to England, and estab-

lish themselves at Bath. During the year previous to their final departure from Ireland, there are several allusions in the letters to J. J. Rousseau, who was then living at Woolton, where he had Mr. Granville of Calwich as one of his nearest neighbours. 'I hope your neighbour Rousseau entertains you,' writes Mrs. Delany to her brother in July 1766. 'Is he pleased with his own Hermitage? It is romantic enough to satisfy a genius, but not so well suited to a sentimental philosopher as to a cynic. It is rather too *rude*, and I should imagine Calwich much better fitted for that purpose.' Again, writing in September to her old friend Lady Andover, she observes: 'I am glad you have seen the Rousseau; he is a genius and a curiosity, and his works extremely ingenious, as I am told, but to young and unstable minds I believe dangerous, as under the guise and pomp of virtue he does advance very erroneous and unorthodox sentiments. It is not the *bon tons* who say this, but I am too near the day of trial to disturb my mind with fashionable whims, Lady Kildare said she would offer Rousseau an elegant retreat if he would educate her children! I own I differ widely from her ladyship, and would rather commit that charge to a downright honest parson, I mean as to religious principles, but perhaps that was a part that did not fall into her scheme at all.'

Mrs. Delany thought it necessary to warn her young niece, who frequently stayed at Calwich, against the wiles of the philosopher. 'Now for a word of advice about Monsieur Rousseau,' she writes, 'who has gained so much of your admiration. His writings are ingenious, no doubt, and were they weeded from the false and erroneous sentiments that are blended throughout his works (as I have been told) they would be as valuable as they are enter-

taining. I own I am not a fair disputant on this subject from my own knowledge of his works, as I avoid engaging in books from whose subtlety I might perhaps receive some prejudice, and I always take an alarm when virtue in general terms is the idol, without the support of religion, the only foundation that can be our security to build upon; that great plausibility and pomp of expression is deluding, and requires great accuracy of judgment not to be imposed upon by it. I therefore think it the wisest and safest way to avoid those snares that I may not have strength enough to break when once entangled in them. I remember a wise maxim of my Aunt Stanley's when I first came into the great world: "Avoid putting yourself in danger, fly from temptations, for it is always odds on the tempter's side."'

The warning does not seem to have had the effect of lessening Mary's admiration for the philosopher, or the pleasure she took in his company. After his return to France, Rousseau inquires, in a letter to the Duchess of Portland, for his good friend Mr. Granville, and also for that gentleman's amiable niece Miss Dewes. Alluding to a little flock of sheep that her uncle had given to Mary, he continues: 'Elle avait des brebis si jeune qu'elle doit avoir trouvé bientôt un berger qui fit son bonheur. C'est une récompense qui méritait la charité chrétienne avec laquelle elle supportait les radotages de son vieux berger, dont le titre n'était pas moins inutile pour elle que c'est pour vous celui que vous m'avez permis de porter.' In the last sentence Rousseau alludes to the title of 'L'Herboriste de Madame la Duchesse de Portland,' which he had bestowed upon himself.

CHAPTER XIII

(1767-1772)

In 1767 the Delanys returned to England after an absence of four years. The Dean was now over eighty, and had become very infirm, so that the long journey was a serious undertaking, but he was anxious not only to be at hand should his affairs necessitate another appeal to the House of Lords, but also to feel that when the end came he should leave his wife in her own country and among her own friends. The pair went first to Calwich and then to Bath, where it was hoped that the Dean might again be benefited by the waters, and there he lingered for several months. During this time Mrs. Delany went to London, and sold the house in Spring Gardens that had been bought for her thirteen years before. It seems probable that the renewal of heavy law expenses had a great deal to do with this determination, and that, being hopeless of her husband's recovery, she considered that her wisest course would be to relieve him from anxiety as to any further claims after his decease, by having a large sum of ready money in the banker's hands, more than sufficient for any possible legal demands. She also felt that she would never have spirit or energy to settle in London alone, and that after her husband's death she would remain at Bath for the remainder of her life.

Dr. Delany died on May 6, 1768, in the eighty-fourth

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Margaret Cavendish Harley afterward Duchess of Portland.
From a portrait by Dahl

year of his age, and was buried at Delville in a piece of ground which had once been part of his garden, but which was thrown into the churchyard for this purpose. On his memorial tablet is engraved the following inscription, said to have been composed by himself: 'Here lieth the body of an orthodox Christian believer, an early and earnest defender of Revelation to the utmost of the abilities with which it pleased God to endow a constant and zealous preacher of the Divine laws, and an humble, unmeriting penitent.' Mary Dewes was with her aunt at the time of the Dean's death, and almost immediately afterwards the Duchess of Portland came to Bath and carried off her old friend for a long quiet visit to Bulstrode, and eventually persuaded her to settle in London, where she would be among her own friends.

Mrs. Delany, who was now sixty-eight years of age, and who had suffered many sorrows and anxieties during the last seven years, instead of yielding to the natural depression that assailed her, made a courageous and successful effort to keep up her spirits and her interest in life, in order that she might be of use and comfort to those who were still left to her. She writes long letters to Mary Dewes, telling her all the news that she thinks likely to interest her young correspondent, and shows a ready sympathy with her niece's occupations and pursuits. The summer was now regularly spent at Bulstrode, and the winter in a house that Mrs. Delany had taken in St. James's Street, where her now inseparable friend, the Duchess, spent nearly every evening with her.

In the letters for 1768 we hear of the death of Lady Hervey, once the toasted beauty, Molly Lepel, and of a Court ball given in honour of the King of Denmark, at which George III., with Lady Mary Lowther for a partner,

Margaret Cavendish Harley afterwards Duchess of Portland
From a portrait by Dahl

danced the 'Hemp-dresser,' a fashionable country dance which lasted two hours.

The King of Denmark's visit made a great sensation in town, and his departure was much lamented by the mob. 'He threw out of window the day before he left an hundred and fifty guineas among them, and he gave a thousand pounds among the King's servants. His travelling, they say, is to conquer a fancy he has for a young lady in Denmark, and that he dislikes his wife extremely.' In September 1768, Mrs. Delany writes to her niece from Bulstrode: 'We returned here on Saturday. At Uxbridge we were obliged to get out of our chaise, the waters were so high, and the bridge that is now building not yet finished. I suppose the newspapers have informed you of the extraordinary inundations occasioned by only one night's rain. The Virginia water broke head, and is entirely gone, fish and all, and a house in the way carried off as clear as if no house had ever been built there! It was surprising to see the water on parade at St. James's like a great lake, and all the way between London and this, the people labouring to throw up the water in pailsfull that overflowed the lower part of the houses and cellars.' A month later she writes from Whitehall: 'We had a fine day for our journey here, and it was lucky, for the chief postillion and his horse tumbled down, and we were obliged to get out of the chaise in the middle of the road. At first the shock was great, as we had reason to think the man was very much hurt, if not killed; but providentially he was neither, only his leg a little bruised. . . . No words can express the Duchess's goodness to me, pressing me to remain with her as long as convenient, but I am myself unequal to the way of life unavoidable here —of late hours and company, which makes me think it

prudent to seek after a house in good earnest. I was told of one yesterday, and went to see it; the place is called Catherine Wheel Lane; it is very small, but both prettily and conveniently situated. The front faces a cross street now called Little St. James's Street, and the back looks into the Duke of Bridgewater's garden very pleasantly. A coach drives very well to the door, and people of fashion live in the row.'

The house was taken, but in January 1769 Mrs. Delany was still at Whitehall. She writes to Lady Andover: 'It is an age since I wrote to dear Lady Andover, and I suffer (as all naughty people do) for my faults. The truth, which I know is always the best solicitor with your ladyship, is that on coming to town I was struck with my Irish goods that had arrived, and so sunk by it that I was not able to write; and now being uncertain where this may kiss your hands, and not without hope that you may be preparing for London, I make it short. Surely London is the place that December to April is the wholesomest for man, woman, and child! . . . My hut in St. James's Street is not very forward, but does not at all grieve my spirit. I am too sensible of my present happy situation to be in haste to quit it.'

Lady Gower and Mrs. Boscawen are still among Mrs. Delany's most regular correspondents. The first-named lady was a character in her way, strong in mind and body, a *grande dame* of the old school. One summer, when she was between seventy and eighty years of age, she gave up riding on horseback, 'on account of the flies,' the avowed reason causing a good deal of amusement to her friends. An extract from one of her letters may be given as a specimen of her style. It is dated from her country house, Bill Hill, Berkshire, August 1769:—

'Fortune has bless'd y^s fforest w^th y^e genius's of y^e age. Mrs. Montagu, Mrs. Carter, Mrs. Dunbar, and L^d Littleton are at Suñing Wells, and sport sentim^ts from morn till noon, from noon till dewy eve. I molest 'em not, contenting myself in my rustick simplicity; 'tis a stupidity y^t may be felt, I don't doubt, but not by me. Mrs. Montagu has coñenced author in *vindication* of Shakespeare, who *wants none*, therefore her work must be deemed a work of supererogation; some coñend it. I 'll have y^t, because I can throw it aside w^n I 'm tired.'

In a letter from Mrs. Boscawen there is an account of the foundation of the fashionable club, afterwards known as Almack's. 'The *female club* I told you of is removed from their quarters, Lady Pembroke objecting to a tavern; it meets, therefore, for the present at certain rooms of Almack's, who for another year is to provide a private house. The first fourteen who imagined and planned it settled its rules and constitution; these were framed upon the model of one of the clubs at Almack's. There are seventy-five chosen (the whole number is to be 200). The ladies nominate and choose the gentlemen, and *vice versa*; so that no lady can exclude a lady, or gentleman a gentleman! The Duchess of Bedford was at first blackballed, but is since admitted. . . . Lady Rochford and Lady Harrington are blackballed, as are Lord March, Mr. Boothby, and one or two more who think themselves pretty gentlemen *du premier ordre*, but it is plain the ladies are not of their opinion. When any of the ladies dine with the society, they are to send word before, but supper comes of course, and is to be served always at eleven. Play is to be deep and constant probably.'

On January 15, 1770, Mrs. Delany writes a cheerful letter in answer to her niece's request for a 'journal':

'What can it be to you who comes in or goes out either of St. James's or the Little Thatch? [Mrs. Delany's new house]. You live in the pure air, by the gliding Thames, the sun glistening in its fair face in the morning, and your favourite Luna at night; and for intellectual pleasures have you not your amiable friends to gladden you every moment? Well, now for a sketch of a journal. The pleasantest moment I spent on Saturday was when I scribbled a few words to you. I eat half a roast onion for my supper, and I dreamed of hobgoblins! Sunday morning tasted my new tea, and was almost poisoned with it, made my complaint immediately, and hope for redress. Had a short but good sermon at St. James's Chapel, and a very full Court. I was much embarrassed by the multitude of fine ladies' chairs joggling against me between Chapel and Hanover Square, where I found my little friend pretty, and had a little sparring of politics with her son. Came home at three, dressed, and went to dinner at Whitehall—no refusal would be taken. After dinner we adjourned to the Little Thatch to meet Mrs. Boscawen. Went to bed exceedingly tired. Got up at nine, and read a lecture to my family on the advantages of early rising! For want of the usual bell to call them up they get later and later.'

In June of this year Mary Dewes became engaged to Mr. Port of Ilam, a man of good character, family, and fortune. For some unexplained reason, her uncle, Mr. Granville, disapproved of the match; and as his influence was paramount in the family, owing probably to the fact that he intended to make one of the young Dewes his heir, the course of true love did not at first run smooth. An extract or two from a note written by Mary to Mr. Port shortly after their engagement gives some idea of a

well-brought-up girl's love-letter in the year 1770. Mary was then twenty-four, at that period rather a late age for a girl to be still unmarried, but it is probable that the training she had received from both her mother and her aunt had rendered her more fastidious than her fellows. She writes from Richmond, where she was staying with Lady Cowper:—

'My dear Mr. Port,—I sent you such a strange, and I fear almost unintelligible, scrawl last Thursday that I fear you could scarce make it out. . . . It is most charming weather, and the moon as bright as possible every night but the last. I was true to my appointment last night, and was happy in thinking we were beholding the same object at the same hour; that reflection will be a still greater comfort to me as you are removed farther off, for our engagement shall still hold good for every full moon till we meet, and then *she* will shine forth with double lustre, and every charm be heightened by our beholding it together. Till that time arrives we must console ourselves in thinking of each other's sincerity, and that everything will turn out as we wish it if it is for the best it should.

> "Let no fond love for earth exact a sigh,
> No doubt divert our steady steps aside;
> Nor let us long to live, nor dread to die,
> Heaven is our hope, and Providence our guide."

'I yesterday received a very polite note from Mr. Walpole to invite me to Strawberry Hill on Monday next to meet the Duchess of Portland and Mrs. Delany, but I am engaged, so have sent an excuse. . . . As we were to be out the whole day, I rose earlier than usual in order to have a little time for reading, as food for the mind is

fully as necessary as food for the body, and I was always delighted with what Dr. Young says in one of his *Night Thoughts*:—

> "A soul without reflection,
> Like a pile without inhabitant,
> Soon to ruin falls."

'It is rather hard upon our sex that we have in general our own education to seek after we are grown up, I mean as to mental qualifications. In our childhood writing, dancing, and music is what is most attended to; and without being a pedant, such a knowledge of grammar as is requisite to make us speak and write correctly is certainly necessary, and also a knowledge of history that one may compare past times with the present, and be able to enter into conversation when those subjects are started, is very agreeable, and I am convinced one is never too old for improvement. The great Mrs. Macaulay[1] hardly knew the meaning of the word grammar until she was thirty years old, and now all her productions go to the press uncorrected.'

Mr. Granville withheld his consent to the marriage for some months longer. In a letter to her niece, dated July 15, 1770, Mrs. Delany says: 'I don't know what to say on a *subject* that occupies my thoughts as much as yours; but all information must come from your side, as I am entirely out of the way of hearing anything. I have nothing to recommend to my dearest Mary during the present state of affairs, but what her excellent principles and good sense suggest, hoping all will end well, but I own it is a severe state of trial.' In another letter written

[1] Catherine Macaulay, author of *A History of England.*

about the same time Mrs. Delany gives a pleasant account of a visit paid by herself and the Duchess to the Garricks at their house on the river: 'Mr. Garrick,' she says, 'did the honours of his house *very respectfully*, and though in high spirits, seemed sensible of the honour done them. Nobody else there but Lady Weymouth and Mrs. Bateman. As to Mrs. Garrick, the more one sees her the better one must like her; she seems never to depart from a perfect propriety of behaviour, accompanied with good taste and gentleness of manners, and I cannot help looking upon her as a *wonderful creature*, considering all circumstances relating to her. The house is singular (which you know I like), and seems to owe its prettiness and elegance to her good taste; on the whole, it has the air of belonging to a *genius*. We had an excellent dinner nicely served, and when over went directly into the garden—a piece of irregular ground sloping down to the Thames, very well laid out, and planted for shade and shelter; and an opening to the river which appears beautiful from that spot, and from Shakespeare's Temple at the end of the improvements, where we drank tea, and where there is a very fine statue of Shakespeare in white marble, and a great chair with a large carved frame, that was *Shakespeare's own chair*, made for him on some particular occasion, with a medallion of him fixed in the back. Many were the relics we saw of the favourite poet. At six o'clock Lady Weymouth's fine group of children walked into the garden, which added to the agreeableness of the scene, and Mr. Garrick made himself as suitable a companion to the children as to the rest of the company.'

Mary Dewes's love-affairs were at last set straight by the all-powerful Duchess of Portland, who invited aunt and niece to Bulstrode, and insisted that Mary should be

united to her lover before she left the house. Accordingly, the couple were married at Bulstrode on December 4, 1770, the consent of Mr. Granville having been previously obtained. On December 7, Mrs. Delany writes to her nephew, the Reverend John Dewes, to congratulate him on his sister's marriage, 'with a prospect of as much happiness as must satisfy all her friends, and I thank God her health is so well established as to give the best hopes that the want of it will not interrupt the felicity of two worthy people, who seem deserving of each other; this must assure you of the good opinion I have of Mr. Port, whose whole behaviour has been most amiable.' In a letter to Lady Andover, written early in the New Year, Mrs. Delany observes that she has been quite in a whirl, for her nephew and niece Port have been with her, and would not bespeak a table or a pair of shoes, but she must give her opinion. The same letter contains some strictures upon the rage for pleasure, or rather for vanity and folly, by which the fashionable world was then animated. 'Ladies lose vast sums,' she writes. 'It answers their purpose by killing that which will kill them (time), little thinking of that bar where they must inevitably appear, and be arraigned for that murder. It mortifies my sex's pride to see women expose themselves so much to the contempt of men, over whom, I think, from nature and education, if they were just to their own dignity, they have so many advantages.'

The bride and bridegroom left town the middle of January, for on the 15th Mrs. Delany writes to Mrs. Port: 'Yesterday morning you had not been gone half an hour when in came little Lord Warwick to invite you and me to a concert to hear the *fiddling woman*, etc., and promised me I should have some Handel; but I was coy

till he promised you should be of a musical party some other time, and I am to be presented to Mrs. Pattoon! To his little Lordship succeeded the great Mr. West, who would have raised my vanity excessively did his heart and tongue ever go together. But this morning I have had a visitor who always puts me into good humour without flattery; his angelic looks and sweetness of manner always drive away every peevish and unreasonable thought. I won't affront your discernment, and write a name under this picture.' The great Mr. West was probably Benjamin West, for we find that Mrs. Delany paid a visit to his studio in February, and to that of Angelica Kaufmann. 'My partiality leans to my sister painter,' she writes; 'she certainly has a great deal of merit, but I like her history still better than her portraits.' Another interesting visit was to Christie's to see the new Wedgwood ware, with the neatness and elegance of which Mrs. Delany declares herself much pleased, but adds: 'It bears a price only for those who have superfluous money, though I had rather game there than at Almack's, and it would be more rational; one would have a pretty thing for one's money, and be saved the dreadful anxiety that attends other gaming, a vice of such deep dye at present, that *nothing within my memory comes up to it*! The bite is more malignant than that of a mad dog, and has all the effects of it.'

There are several unpublished letters to Mrs. Port during the spring of 1771, from which the following extracts may be quoted:—

'T. H. Court, 19 *March* 1771.

'I don't wonder such a pleasant home with so dear and valuable a partner should delight you, let the season be what it will, but you are an unconscionable tantaliser to

tell me of *sunshine*, *beautiful scenes*, and *singing birds*, whilst we are choked with *fogs*, see nothing but through a mist, and the best musick I have heard since you went has been the Yorkshire Bun-man's song, who is again returned to his usual rounds. . . . When I come to Ilam I shall most certainly commence a friendship with your treasure of a carpenter, as I have a particular regard for a clever mechanick.'

'*April* 18.

'For fear you should imagine I am grunting by my chimney corner, this is to testify that I am *toute au contraire* engaged with masquerades up to the eyes; am going as an important judge to give my opinion on Mrs. Shelley's dress, and at seven Mrs. R. and I go to Lady Weymouth's to see masques. . . . I very much doubt whether you will get a servant that has been used to London that will sit down quietly in the country; there seems to be an universal dissipation of manners from the highest to the lowest, and the cook I gave an account of, who was a most desirable servant, said she could not live in the country—it was so melancholy.'

'*April* 27*th*.

'I am full of busyness, scratching plans, and giving manifold directions; as much is to be done to make my new dwelling habitable [Mrs. Delany had bought a house in St. James's Place]. The best part is finished, which is paying for it, and that I did on Thursday. I have had all this morning bricklayers and carpenters, and have made use of all my spurs to get it done time eno' to settle all my goods and chattels in it before I go to Ilam, that at my return I should have nothing to do but sit down quietly in it.'

In September 1771, Mrs. Port's first child was born, a girl named Georgina Mary Ann, after Lady Cowper, her great-aunt and her grandmother. Mrs. Boscawen writes to her old friend, Mrs. Delany, to congratulate her on the safe and happy arrival of a great-niece, who, she adds, 'has nothing to do but to grow up as like her great and good aunt as ever she can. I have always thought,' continues the writer naïvely, 'that it is better to begin with a girl. The first is generally *tant soit peu enfant gâté;* now it is of much less consequence to spoil a girl than a boy; for he being armed with power, will make his caprices felt, whereas she, being born to obey, will be reduced to submission sooner or later.'

Mrs. Delany paid a visit to the Ports at Ilam after the birth of the child, and there is a note written by her at Sudbury on her homeward journey, in which she says: 'Could I have attended to the beauties, *en passant*, between dear sweet Ilam and this place, I should present my Mary with such a mixture of pastoral delights as would have served a Claud or a Shenstone for their whole lives; but I felt a tender string pulling all the way, and my mind could dwell on nothing but what I *had* enjoyed. However, great as my regret was, I overflowed with thankfulness to that good Providence who had changed the apprehensions that for some time clouded the fair scenes at Ilam, and turned our heaviness into joy.'

The chief sensation of the early part of the year 1772 was the opening of the Pantheon in Oxford Street, a place of entertainment which was to cause Almack's and Carlisle House to hide their diminished heads. The Pantheon started with a brilliant masquerade, and Mrs. Delany writes: 'The lighting, and

brilliant éclat on going in, they say, was beyond all description, and the going in and out made so easy by lanes of constables that there was not the least confusion. To balance these delights, the High Street robbers give many panics, but pleasure will conquer all fears; and the men on horseback with a pistol at their breast will at last grow so familiar as not to be regarded more than a common turnpike that makes you pay for your passage. Feminine fears as well as bashfulness are no more a check upon the female than upon the male maccaronies; pleasure is the prize they run for, and then nothing stops their course.'

The deterioration of manners and morals in the younger generation is a subject upon which elderly ladies love to dwell, and Mrs. Delany is no exception to this rule. 'The strange behaviour of the young ladies of the present age,' she observes, 'makes one tremble for those that are to come upon the stage; and I think much is owing to the want of that humble respectful deference to parents and elders that we were taught in our childhood. It seems odd in one of seventy-one years of age to link herself with twenty-five; but you had the blessing of a pattern and instructor who was exempt from the vanity and carelessness of these modern mothers.'

In the letters of this year there are several allusions to the famous naturalists, Sir Joseph Banks and Dr. Solander, both of whom had accompanied Captain Cook on his voyage round the world. Mrs. Delany met them both at Bulstrode during the summer when they were engaged in preparing an account of their travels, as well as the great work on Natural History which was published at Sir Joseph's sole expense. Among the other visitors to Bulstrode this autumn was the Princess Amelia, whose

coming, says Mrs. Delany, 'made some little disturbance even in this palace. All the comfortable sofas and great chairs, all the pyramids of books, all the tables, and even the spinning-wheel, were banished for the day, and the blew [*sic*] damask chairs set in prim order round the room, only one arm'd chair placed in the middle of the room for Her Royal Highness. The Duchess met her at the hall door, and I stood in the hall; when the Princess had paid her compliments to her Grace, she came up to me, and said many civil things, which I hope I answered properly. She was so easy, good-humoured, and entertaining that I was glad I had not absented myself. She was delighted with the place and her entertainment. The Princess went all over the house and garden, but insisted on the Duchess and myself not accompanying her there, only her ladies. We dined at three, and she had a polite attention to every ornament on the table. After dinner she would see my own apartments, and made me display all my frippery work, which she graciously commended. We then adjourned to the library, and at seven the Princess returned to Gunnersbury by moonlight.'

For the 16th of September 1772, there is a letter headed: 'To Miss Port of Ilam, aged one year, from her Aunt Delany, aged seventy-two,' which runs as follows:—

'My dearest little Child,—This is your birthday, and I wish you joy of its return; perhaps if you knew what a world you are entered into, so abounding with evil, you would not say "Ta" to me for my congratulations; but the precept and example of your excellent parents will teach you to make so good a use of the tryals you will necessarily meet with, that they will not only be supportable, but lead to a state of happiness that will have no alloy. This

is above your understanding at present, and a rattle or a little squeaking cuckoo will suit you better, so for the present I leave you to your infantine amusements, which I shall be as ready to contribute to when I can, as I am to testify how dearly you are beloved by your great-aunt Delany.'

CHAPTER XIV

(1772-1776)

MRS. DELANY does not often indulge in gossip, except of the most harmless kind; but in the autumn of 1772 the Duchess of Kingston, *alias* Mrs. Hervey, *née* Miss Chudleigh, was scandalising all London, and an occasional allusion to her and her eccentricities must have been quite irresistible. We read, for example, that her Grace 'has her state coach following her wherever she bestows her presence, with three or four ladies (or rather misses) called her maids of honour. She wears a sash trimmed with roses of ribbon, in each a large diamond, no cap, and diamonds in her hair; a tucker edged with diamonds, and no more of a tippet than makes her fair bosom conspicuous rather than hides it.'

Another lady who had provided the town with a topic of conversation, though of quite a different kind, was the witty Mrs. Montagu. She had lately built herself a fine new house in Hill Street, one room in which had afforded much amusement of a malicious kind to her large circle of acquaintance. This was the room of Cupidons, which was opened with an assembly for all the foreigners, literati, and maccaronies of the day. 'How such a genius,' exclaims Mrs. Delany, 'at her age, and so circumstanced, could think of painting the walls of her dressing-room with bowers of roses and jessamine, entirely inhabited by

little cupids in all their wanton ways, is astonishing! Unless she looks upon herself as the wife of old Vulcan, and mother of all these little loves.'

In spite of the occasional absurdity of Mrs. Montagu's taste, Mrs. Delany seems to have felt a genuine regard for her, and highly approved her patronage of deserving men of letters, such as Dr. Beattie, author of *The Minstrel* and the *Essay on Truth*, an answer to Hume's sceptical essays. Mrs. Delany describes the Christian Philosopher, as he was commonly called, as being plain in appearance, with a sensible, honest countenance, and very modest, civil manners. 'I feel the deepest gratitude to Dr. Beattie,' she writes, 'for his successful endeavours to rescue this nation from that gloomy scepticism which a few false philosophers of dangerously shining talents have so fatally spread among us; *miserable philosophy* is that which robs us of every hope in the hour of affliction, and of the sweet sensations of religious gratitude in the enjoyments of prosperity. Do not you honour Mrs. Montagu for the part she has taken to introduce this excellent champion of Christianity into the notice of the great world, and to obtain for him some other reward than that of barren fame?'

There are two or three unpublished letters of this year. In one, dated April 11, Mrs. Delany writes: 'Here is Miss Foley come to carry me off to Lestart's,[1] where she is to sit for her picture. Just returned, not quite satisfied. The picture is like, but not favourably so; another sitting I hope will improve it. Lestart is a great artist in his way, but not as a portrait painter, in my poor opinion.

'On Wednesday I dined at Lord Dartmouth's. Beside his own lovely family (eight in number), there was Lord

[1] Listard, the miniaturist, born at Geneva 1702.

Guildford, and Mrs. and Mr. Montagu, etc. (a table of ten, two removes, second course 14, dessert 16—that 's for P.) . . . I believe I did not tell you I had been at the painter's Tuesday morning with *les amans* [Miss Foley and Lord Clanbrazil]. I saw a picture of Lestart's doing of himself in miniature, admired it, and next day Lord Clanbrazil made me a present of it—his whole behaviour is delicate and generous. . . . The present prattle of the town is Lord Folkestone's match being broken off with Miss Duncombe—various reasons. The true one, I believe, that the girl did not know her own mind, not seventeen years of age—no mother to conduct her. Some say she likes somebody else who has persuaded her that Lord Folkestone only married her for her fortune; it is not clear that it may not still prove a match, and that the article of fortune may palliate the affront.'

'*Dec.* 6.

'At last Lord Caermarthen is married, and must be the most ungrateful of all men if he does not make an excellent husband to a lady who has shown so extraordinary a partiality to him. Her finery was excessive—eight full-dressed gowns and petticoats, twelve dressed sacks, twelve negligées, with laces and all suitable. But she hates dress as much as her mother loves it; at their age they should exchange dispositions. I wish you joy of your new cousin Talmache,[1] the sea-man whose income is £500 a year. He has spent his fortune, but by some means has found the way to Lady Bridget Lane's heart, and if not already married, is to be soon. She has been cunning eno' to secure everything for herself, and is so gracious as to allow

[1] Mrs. Delany alludes to John Tollemache, Captain, R.N., fourth son of Lord Dysart, who married Lady Grace Carteret. John Tollemache married Lady Bridget Lane Fox, and was killed in a duel in New York in the twenty-fifth year of his age.

him his annuity for his pocket-money. The courtship was singular and laconish. Mr. Talmache admired a fine ring upon Lady B.'s finger. She made him a present of it, and desired in return a small plain gold hoop-ring. The proposal accepted, she said to him, "Are you not a lucky man to be preferred to all my numerous admirers?" He replied, "I suppose you like me better than any of them." There's gallantry and delicacy for you! . . .

'As to your new friend whom you have introduced in such a manner to my esteem, I am afraid she will have a good deal to answer for, unless she proves as merciful as powerful. It is a subject I can't joke upon, nor be indifferent to. My opinion and knowledge of your brothers' virtue, so uncommon in this degenerate age, their ingenuity as well as good sense, their steady adherence to their several duties and engagements in life, and the preference they give to a reasonable enjoyment of the blessings they possess, to the empty show and vanity of the world (which their education and connections might easily have led them into), will, I trust, make them worthy even of a Miss I——'

Early in the year 1773, Mrs. John Chapone (*née* Hester Mulso) brought out her *Letters to a Young Lady on the Improvement of the Mind*, a little work which at one bound leaped into fame. Mrs. Delany was perhaps a little prejudiced in favour of the book by the fact that its author was the daughter-in-law of her old friend Sally Chapone. 'It appears,' she says, 'to be upon the best plan I have ever met with on the subject. It is plain truth in an easy elegant style, and the sentiments natural and delicate. . . . It sells *prodigiously*. One should hope from that, though there are many corrupted minds, there are also many ready to listen to the voice of the charmer.'

Another work of a very different type was making a great sensation about the same time. This was *Lord Chesterfield's Letters*, which in Mrs. Delany's opinion were 'a medley of sense, knowledge of the world, attention to the minutest articles of good breeding, entertainment, satire, and immorality, and not a few inconsistencies; for at the same time he recommends decency of behaviour and avoiding all low vices, he recommends everything that can shake the foundation of virtue and religion, though at times he mentions both as necessary. In short, "all wickedness is folly, and all folly is inconsistency," says a wise man that I suppose Lord Chesterfield was never acquainted with, or at least was not wise enough to be instructed by him.' Later, when Bernard Granville lay ill at Calwich, his sister sent him *Chesterfield's Letters* in the hope that they would amuse him, and gave a further criticism of the book, a criticism which is interesting as the contemporary opinion of an intelligent woman. 'I am not at all surprised,' she writes, 'that you should be entertained with *Lord Chesterfield's Letters*, and approve of many of them, but I am afraid as you go on his duplicity and immorality will give you as much offence as his indiscriminating accusation does the ladies. Those who do not deserve his lash despise it, and conclude he kept very bad company. Those who are conscious they deserve his censure will be piqued, but silent. The general opinion of these letters among the better sort of men is that they are ingenious, useful as to polish of manners, but very hurtful in a moral sense. He mentions a decent regard to religion, at the same time recommends falsehood even to your most intimate acquaintance—and adultery as an accomplishment. *Les grâces* are the sum-total of his religion. The conclusion of his life showed how inferior his heart

was to his head; unkind and ungrateful to an excellent wife, who had laid great obligations upon him, and the same to all his dependants.'

In the early 'seventies,' the blue-stockings, male and female, were causing a good deal of amusement to their more frivolous acquaintance. Mrs. Delany, though she had many friends among them, never herself belonged to any of their coteries, and had but small sympathy with the pedantic absurdities practised by the more advanced members of the society. Although she afterwards became much attached to Miss Burney, she refused to know either Mrs. Thrale or Doctor Johnson, in spite of the high admiration in which she held the moral and intellectual qualities of the latter. Doctor Johnson, however, was acquainted with the Ports, and paid a visit to Ilam in July 1774, though curiously enough there is no mention of the visit in any of the letters for that year. It is recorded that in speaking of Mrs. Delany, Doctor Johnson said he had heard Edmund Burke observe that she was 'a truly great woman of fashion, that she was not only the woman of fashion of the present age, but the highest bred woman in the world, and the woman of fashion of all ages.'

In a letter dated May 10, 1774, there is an account of the assembly of blue-stockings which was in the habit of meeting at Mrs. Miller's house at Bath Easton. 'Once a week the wits produce their works, judgment passes, and a prize is given to the best. Lady Spencer and Lady Georgina Spencer were invited to a breakfast and to partake of the poetical entertainment. Amongst other offerings of the Muses, Mr. Miller read one addressed to Lady Georgina, which perhaps you have seen in the *Public Advertiser*, without wishing to know the author—

too gross a flattery not to distress the person chiefly concerned, who blushed and looked down in the utmost confusion. Said Mr. Miller, "Sure, the author of the verses deserves the prize for having chosen so fine a subject." It would have been a poor compliment to have disputed that judgment in the presence of *the* person, and accordingly it was agreed to, and the author to be declared. "It was I," says Mr. Miller. "And now I will read them over again," which he was preparing to do when Lady Spencer relieved poor Lady Georgina by making her curtsey an excuse, and withdrew.'

A month later the young beauty, who had been put so much out of countenance by Mr. Miller's effusion, was married to the Duke of Devonshire. 'The great wedding is over,' writes Mrs. Delany on June 7, 'and at last a surprise, for this was the expected day; but they managed very cleverly, as they were all at the Birthday, and the Duke and Duchess danced at the ball. It was as great a secret to Lady Georgina as to the world. Sunday morning she was told her doom; she went out of town (to Wimbledon) early on Sunday, and they were married at Wimbledon Church, as quietly and uncrowded as if John and Joan had tied the Gordian knot. Don't think that because I have made use of the word 'doom' that it was a melancholy sentence (though a surprise) to the young lady; for she is so peculiarly happy as to think him very agreeable, and had not the least regret—a bliss which I most sincerely hope will prove a lasting one. The Duke's intimate friends say he has sense, and does not want for merit—to be sure the jewel has not been well polished; had he fallen under the tuition of Lord Chesterfield, he might have possessed *les grâces*, but at present only that of his dukedom belongs to him.'

The great social event of this season was the splendid Fête Champêtre, given in honour of the approaching marriage of Lord Stanley[1] and Lady Betty Hamilton. Mrs. Delany sends Mrs. Port the following description of the entertainment, which came from one of the company:—

'I think it a fairy scene that may equal any in Madame Danois. Lord Stanley, the master of the entertainment, was dressed like Reubens, Lady Betty Hamilton like Reubens' wife. The company were received upon the lawn before the house, which is scattered with trees, and opens to the downs. The company arriving made the scene most enchanting, and it was greatly enlivened by a most beautiful setting sun breaking from a black cloud in its greatest glory. After half an hour's sauntering, the company were called to the other side, to a more confined spot, where benches were placed in a semicircle, and a fortunate clump of trees in the centre of a small lawn had a band of music; a stage was formed by a part being divided from the other part of the garden with sticks entwined with natural flowers in wreaths and festoons. A little dialogue between a shepherd and a shepherdess, with a welcome to the company, was sung and said, and then dancing by sixteen men and sixteen women, *figurantis* from the opera, lasted about half an hour, after which the party was employed in swinging, shooting with bows and arrows, and various country sports. The gentlemen and ladies danced on the green till it was dark, and then preceded the music to the other side of the garden, where a magnificent saloon had been built, illuminated, and decorated with the utmost elegance; here they danced till supper, when curtains were drawn

[1] Afterwards Earl of Derby. His second wife was Miss Farren, the actress.

up, which showed the supper in a most convenient and elegant apartment which was built quite round the saloon. After the supper, which was exceedingly good there was an interlude, in which a Druid entered as an inhabitant of the *Oaks*, welcomed Lady Betty, described the happiness of Lord Stanley, and in a prophetic strain foretold the happiness that must follow so happy a union, which, with choruses and singing and dancing by the dryads, Cupid and Hymen attending, concluded with a transparent painting with the crest of Hamilton and Stanley surrounded by emblems of Cupid and Hymen crowning it with a wreath of flowers. People in general were very elegantly dressed; the very young as peasants, the next as Polonaise, the matrons in dominos, and the men in dominos, and many gardiniers, as in the opera dances.'

During this summer Mrs. Delany was much distressed on account of her brother's painful and lingering illness. The journey to Calwich was too long and too tiring to admit of her undertaking it; the most that she could do was to write frequent gossiping letters, in the hope that they might amuse and distract the invalid. In July she writes from Bulstrode on a subject which, a little later, was to create an extraordinary sensation in society—the trial for bigamy of the Duchess of Kingston. This notorious lady had made a short visit to England, and then set off for Russia, 'her sudden flight occasioned by Mr. Evelyn Meadows having gone to law with her to prove her marriage with Mr. Hervey, which it is thought he will certainly do, having gained a certain evidence of it—a man whom the Duchess of Kingston gave ten thousand pounds as hush-money, and who for the same sum from Mr. Meadows is gained against her. So rogues betray rogues; it is happy

when the innocent escape their snares. . . . I don't wonder that *our* young men are entertained with *Lord Chesterfield's Letters*, and I trust their principles are too well grounded to be hurt by their immorality. The present Lord Chesterfield is gone to finish his travels. He came over on the death of the late Lord, and is not yet of age. I don't hear him commended, and his behaviour to Lady Chesterfield was very unhandsome. He was a distant relation to the late Lord, but the nearest to the title. Lord Chesterfield educated this boy, and had an attention to him, not out of kindness, but because he was to keep up the name and title, and left him near twenty thousand pounds a year. Lady Chesterfield's income is £4000 a year, but chiefly her own money. It was hard, considering how good a wife she had been, and what a good fortune she was to him, *not* to leave her in *very* affluent circumstances for her own life. He even left away her jewels, which were chiefly purchased with her own money, and presents of the Duchess of Kendal's, but the law restored them to her as her own paraphernalia.'

Mrs. Delany never ceased to take an interest in the career of her young cousin, the Duchess of Devonshire, and there is an obvious allusion to the fashionable beauty in a letter dated March 1775: 'I really can say with Cato, "I am sick of this bad world," when I suffer my imagination to wander among the multitude; it would be more supportable could one select a number of any magnitude *not* affected by the great whirlpool of dissipation and (indeed, I fear I may add) vice. This bitter reflection rises from what I hear everybody say of a great and handsome relation of ours just beginning her part; but I do hope she will be like the other young actors and actresses who begin by over-acting when they first come

upon the stage, and abate of her superabundant spirits (that now mislead her), and settle into a character worthy of applause and of the station she possesses, but I *tremble* for her!'

Mrs. Delany certainly would not have approved of the Duchess's enthusiasm for politics, or her canvassing tactics at the Westminster election; for in a letter to Mr. Granville, written early in 1775, she observes: 'The world is in a bother about the American affairs, but I am no politician, and don't enter into those matters. Women lose all dignity when they enter into subjects that don't belong to them; their own sphere affords them opportunities eno' to show their real consequence. A pretending woman and a trifling, ignorant man are equally despicable.'

On July 2, 1775, Mr. Bernard Granville died at Calwich. His death was a sensible shock to his sister, though he had not been a particularly kind or affectionate brother, never having quite forgiven her for her second marriage with a man of obscure family. His nephew, the Reverend John Dewes, inherited Calwich, and, some years later, took the name of Granville.

In the letters for 1775 are several allusions to Mason's *Life of Gray*, which was evidently the book of the day, and to the trial of the Duchess of Kingston, which entertainment seems to have been patronised by the whole fashionable world. 'The solicitude for tickets,' writes Mrs. Delany, 'the distress of rising early to be time enough for a place, the anxiety about hairdressers, mortification that feathers and flying lappets should be laid aside for that day, as they would obstruct the view,—all these important matters were discussed in my little circle last night. . . . I bravely refused a ticket for the Queen's

box, and going with our dear Duchess, for I feared the bustle my spirits would be in, now unused to such splendid appearances, and doubted whether my eyesight and hearing would have been at all gratified.' Later she adds: 'Greatly to the general satisfaction, the shameless Duchess is degraded into as shameless a countess. Sure there never was so thorough an actress. Garrick says she has so much outacted him, it is time for him to leave the stage; but that does her too much honour. One should search the jails for the perjured, notorious offenders for a parallel to such an infamous character. She has, however, escaped the *searing* of her *hand*, and is turned over for condign punishment to her *conscience*. It was astonishing how she was able to speak for three-quarters of an hour, which she did yesterday, but it was labour in vain. Bernard was there four days, and so much fatigued with sitting ten or twelve hours that he gave up the last day, but he was at the most entertaining part of it.'

It is in the letters for 1776 that we find the first allusion to Mrs. Delany's famous paper mosaic Flora, now in the Print-room at the British Museum.[1] This extraordinary work was the wonder and admiration of her contemporaries, and the subject of praise from Sir Joshua Reynolds, Horace Walpole, Dr. Darwin, and many other distinguished men. The following account is given of the manner in which the idea of a paper Flora first occurred to the inventor: 'Having a piece of Chinese paper on the table of bright scarlet, a scarlet geranium of the same colour caught Mrs. Delany's eye; and taking out her scissors, she amused herself with cutting out each flower in the paper which resembled its hue; she laid the paper petals on a black ground, and was so pleased with

[1] Bequeathed by Lady Llanover.

the effect that she proceeded to cut out the calyx, stalks, and leaves in different shades of green, and pasted them down. After she had completed a sprig of geranium in this way, the Duchess of Portland came in, and exclaimed, "What are you doing with that geranium?" having taken the paper imitation for the real flower. Mrs. Delany replied that if the Duchess really thought it so like the original, a new work was begun from that moment' [1773].

The work thus casually begun was continued for more than ten years; and when failing eyesight compelled the artist to give up the undertaking, her Flora contained close upon a thousand delineations of flowers and plants. There is an allusion to the new occupation in a gossiping letter to Mrs. Port, dated April 1776. 'I don't think,' writes Mrs. Delany, 'I have heard this winter of so many pranks as the last; indeed, everybody has been so taken up with the modern Moll Flanders [the Duchess of Kingston] that nothing else has been talked of. She is now gone to the Pope for absolution, but the Meadows have not done with her yet. . . . Since I last wrote I had a visit from the Duchess of Gordon; she is beautiful indeed. Lady Bute brought her here under the pretence of showing her my herbal, on purpose to treat me with her beauty. She is very natural and good-humoured, but her very broad Scotch accent does not seem to belong to the very great delicacy of her appearance. The spring flowers supply me with work, for I have already done since the beginning of March twenty plants.'

CHAPTER XV

(1776-1779)

In the summer of 1776 occurred the first informal meeting between Mrs. Delany and the couple who were to prove her truest and most devoted friends during the remainder of her days—George the Third and Queen Charlotte. On August 16th Mrs. Delany writes to Mrs. Port from Bulstrode: 'Though the King and Queen drink tea here this evening, and the Duchess threatens to produce me among the antiquities, I am composed enough to thank my darling Mary for her letter, and hope the agreeable party succeeded according to your wishes. It is very pleasant to see the improvement of our manufactures, and to consider how many poor people are supported by them that otherwise would be starving, or following desperate courses for their maintenance; but I fear it is a great sign of the depravity of our nation that though there is all manner of encouragements and employments to engage them besides defending their country from rebellious oppression, that there should at this time be so much robbing, but I am very apt to think those dishonourable collectors are more among the middling than the poorer sort; everybody in all ranks and degrees live above their fortunes—avarice, vanity, and pride make spendthrifts. Only an hour's reflection on their conduct, had they any principles, would show them how much more disgraceful it is to run in debt than to retrench in

order to do justice, or to live within bounds in order to prevent what in time must bring ruin or disgrace to their families. I am led to these reflections from having heard so much lately of our cousins [the Foleys], but it seems I must have thrown away some compassion, for it is now thought a good joke that Lady Harriet Foley was handed out of her own house into her coach by two bailiffs. Ah! poor bashfulness! Ah! gentle modesty! where are you flown? Extravagance and effrontery have taken your places.'

In a letter to Lady Andover, Mrs. Delany gives the following account of the royal visit: 'Great have been our visiting exploits, numerous have been the visitors of all sorts and sizes, from the King and Lord Mansfield down to Edmund Burke, from the Queen and Lady Weymouth down to Miss Wheat. On Monday evening, between six and seven, came their serene Majesties, in a chaise with a pair of horses and grooms attending. Lady Weymouth came with them. All things were prepared for their reception, and the drawing-room divested of every comfortable circumstance. I pleaded hard with her Grace for permission to go that day to London; she was inexorable; but I still had hopes that so insignificant a person would be overlooked, and that I should be fully gratified with seeing their royalties from the window, or through a keyhole! But I was mistaken, and Lady Weymouth was sent by the Queen to desire I would bring the *hortus siccus*. I obeyed, and what does your Ladyship think?—that I was miserable or wished myself at York? No, truly; I was charmed, and I was pleased, and I even wished they had staid half an hour longer. They did great justice to dear Lady Weymouth's merit, and spoke not only with approbation, but with kindness, of everybody they knew our most dear friend had

a regard for; nor was Lord Suffolk and Lady Andover forgot! In short, had I been told that the King and Queen had made the Duchess of Portland a visit, and that she was neither weary nor hurt by it, I could hardly have believed it —but, indeed, they seemed to receive great pleasure from it themselves, took notice, and admired everything; and, above all, I am sure, the possessor of what gave them so much entertainment. I had my panics that she would stand till she grew faint, but the King and Queen insisted on her sitting down the greatest part of the time.'

In November of this year, Court Dewes, Mrs. Delany's eldest nephew, paid a visit to Paris, carrying with him a letter of introduction to Rousseau. From thence he wrote a long and interesting letter to his aunt, with the following curious account of his endeavour to find the sentimental philosopher: 'I am not without hopes of seeing Rousseau, though I have not done so as yet. As soon as I arrived I called at his lodgings, up three pair of stairs, in an unfashionable part of the town, and a mean-looking house, making a striking contrast to the ostentation with which his *rival* Voltaire lives at his *château*, as he calls it, at Ferney. I was admitted into a little kind of ante-chamber, filled with bird-cages; there I saw Madame Rousseau (*née* Vasseur). She told me her husband (she repeated "*bon mari*" *ten times*, I believe, in the course of five minutes' conversation) had had a fall, had hurt himself, and could not see anybody; but if I would call in a week's time, I might see him. I left my letter, and in about a week sent to know how he did, and if he was well enough to admit me; but he still continued too ill to receive visits. I fancy he is *really so*, for I do not find that when he is well he is uncommonly difficult of access. He now has resumed his first occupation, and

copies music for hire, esteeming it his duty to evince by his practice the truth of what he has somewhere said, that every one in society ought to have some occupation. I shall call upon him again to-morrow, and then, if I do not succeed, give the matter up.'

There is an occasional allusion to the war with America during the winter; and in a letter dated May 1778 is the announcement of the death of Lord Chatham. 'He never recovered his fall in the House of Lords, but I dare say it was a consolation to him, under all sufferings, to think that he died in his calling. Many panegyrics, many aspersions, will be bandied backwards and forwards, as no man ever was higher or lower in his sentiments and in the estimation of the world; but he had undoubtedly great abilities, and he had served his country. He would have been a truly great character had not an unbounded ambition, and a vanity hardly to be equalled, tarnished his good qualities. What havoc do those two great underminers of virtue make in the human heart! and how much safer and more eligible is that state of life that saves us from such destructive temptations!'

The name of Hannah More first makes its appearance in the correspondence about this time. Mrs. Boscawen, writing to Mrs. Delany in June 1778, remarks: 'I am very glad you approve of Miss More's *Essays*; such an *imprimatur* does her honour. I believe her to be a worthy and religious woman of exceedingly good principles, and then one may hope that whatever she writes may do *some* good; at least, we are sure it can do no harm. She wrote that she had the honour of a very polite card from Mrs. Delany, and was *much* flattered with her notice.'

In Hannah More's poem, 'Sensibility,' which appeared in 1778, many of the great (and little) people of the day

were described in terms of rather fulsome laudation. The Duchess of Portland, Mrs. Boscawen, and Mrs. Delany were all immortalised (!) in this effusion, the latter being the subject of the following lines:—

> 'Delany shines, in worth serenely bright,
> Wisdom's strong ray, and virtue's milder light.
> And she who blessed the friend and graced the page
> Of Swift, still lends her lustre to our age:
> Long, long protract thy light, O star benign!
> Whose setting beams with added brightness shine!'

In the summer of 1778 the social intercourse between Bulstrode and Windsor grew more intimate, and visits to and from the royal neighbours were of frequent occurrence. On August 12 (the Prince of Wales' birthday) the King and Queen, with eight of their children and numerous attendants, fifty persons in all, drove over to breakfast at Bulstrode. The letters to Mrs. Port and Lady Andover contain full accounts of all that passed on this occasion, and also during the return visit to Windsor, which took place a day later. 'Before twelve o'clock,' writes Mrs. Delany, 'the cavalcade drove into the court, the Dowager-Duchess of Portland ready on the steps at the hall-door to receive her royal guests. I was below stairs in my own apartment, not dressed, and uncertain if I should be thought of. But down came Lady Weymouth (with her pretty eyes sparkling) with the Queen's commands that I should attend her, which I did. The Queen most graciously came up to me and the three princesses. The King and the two eldest princes were in the dining-room looking at the pictures, but soon came in, and they all went in a train through the great apartment to the Duchess's china closet, and, with wondering and inquiring eyes, admired all her magnificent curiosities. They staid above

half an hour, and I took that time to take breath, and sit down quietly in the drawing-room. When they returned, the Queen sat down and called me to her to talk about the chenille work, praising it much more than it deserved, but with a politeness that could not fail of giving pleasure; and, indeed, her manners are most engaging, there is so much dignity and affability blended that it is hard to say whether one's respect or love predominates.

'The Duchess brought her Majesty a dish of tea, rolls and cakes, which she accepted, but would carry it back herself when she had drunk the tea into the gallery, where everything proper for the time of day was prepared. The King drank chocolate; the younger part of the company seemed to take a good share of all the good things. The King was all spirits and good humour, extremely pleased, as well as the Queen, with the place and the entertainment. The King asked me if I had added to my book of flowers, and desired he might see it. It was placed on a table before the Queen, who was attended by the Princess Royal and the rest of the ladies, the King standing and looking over them. I kept my distance till the Queen called to me to answer some question about a flower, when I came, and the King brought a chair and set it at the table, and graciously took my hand and seated me in it, an honour I could not receive without some confusion and hesitation. "Sit down, sit down," said her Majesty; "it is not every one has a chair brought them by a king."

'It would take a quire of paper to tell you all that passed at Bulstrode that morning; and I must carry you on to new scenes and honours at Windsor. I had an opportunity of saying to the Queen that it had long been my wish to see *all* the royal family. Upon which she said,

"You have not seen them all yet, but if you will come to Windsor Castle with the Duchess you shall see them altogether." The King came up to us; and on her telling him what had passed, he confirmed the same, and the next day was named, but that I must defer to another opportunity.'

The story of the return visit is told in a letter dated August 21: 'I was commanded to attend the Duchess of Portland to Windsor Castle, which I did. We got there by six, the hour appointed, and was received in the lower apartment at the castle. In the first large room were the three eldest princesses and the ladies that attend them. We passed through to the Queen's bed-chamber, where she was with Lady Weymouth and Lady Charlotte Finch. She received the Duchess with gracious smiles, and was so easy and condescending in her manner to me, that I felt no perturbation, though it is so long a time since I was conversant with kings and courts. The Queen sate down, and not only made the ladies do the same, but had a chair placed for me opposite to her, asking me at the same time "if it was too much in the air from the door and the window." What dignity such strokes of humanity and *delicate good breeding* add to the highest rank! In that room were the two youngest princesses, one not three, the other not a year old, both lovely children. Princess Mary, a delightful little creature, curtseying and prattling to everybody. She calls the Duchess "Lady Weymouth's mama." She asked me if I was "another mama of Lady Weymouth's." A little before seven the King and his *seven sons* came into the room; and after a great deal of gracious conversation, the Queen told the Duchess she hoped she would excuse her taking her usual walk with the King and all the princes and princesses on the terrace,

"as the people constantly expected to see them." The Queen said she would leave Lady Weymouth, that the Duchess might not lose any of her company, and the Queen went and fetched the Bishop of Lichfield to be of our party until they came in from their walk, which lasted half an hour. When they returned, the King, Queen, etc., went into the next room, where the musick was playing and the tea ready. I kept back, as you may imagine, not advancing but as I was called. Princess Mary was sitting in the first window, looking at the crowd gathered under it. I stopped, and she asked me several questions, in which time I was separated from the rest of my train, and liked my corner so well that I remained there.

'The princes and princesses had a mind to dance. They were permitted to do so, and were a pretty show indeed. I was so pleased with seeing them dance that I forgot I was standing all the time, when the Duke of Montague came up to me and drew a chair for me, saying the King had sent him to desire me to sit down, which I *then* found I was glad to do. The princes, between their dances, came up and talked to me with the greatest politeness and good humour. The King came to the Prince of Wales, who was standing near me, and said he thought they had better dance no more to that musick, being composed of hautbois and other wind musick, as he thought it must be painful to them to play any longer, and his Majesty was sure the princes would be unwilling to hurt them, but at the Queen's house they should have properer musick, and dance as long as they liked. The word was given, and their Majesties walked to the Queen's house, which is across the great court and part of Windsor town. The Queen said that she had ordered a chaise for the Duchess and me, as she thought that walking might not be agree-

able. We followed, and were ushered into the house by the gentlemen that were ready at the door. Indeed, the entrance into the first room was *éblouissante* after coming out of the sombre apartment in Windsor, all furnished with beautiful Indian paper, chairs covered with embroideries of the liveliest colours, glasses, tables, sconces, in the best taste, the whole calculated to give the greatest cheerfulness to the place. The second room we passed through was the musick room, where the concert began as soon as we entered. As I was the last in the train, and timid of being too forward, I stopped in this room, where the King soon came, took me by the hand, and led me into the drawing-room. After looking about and admiring the encouragement given to our own manufactures, we went back into the first room, and were all seated. The Prince of Wales and the Bishop of Osnaburg [Prince Frederick] began the ball, and danced a minuet better than I ever saw it danced. Then the Prince of Wales danced with the Princess Royal, who has a very graceful, agreeable *air*, but not a *good ear*. The *delightful* little Princess Mary, who had been a spectator all this time, then danced with Prince Adolphus a dance of their *own composing*, and soon after all were dispersed. We got into the chaise about ten, and got home very much pleased with our entertainment, and less fatigued than I could have imagined.'

Towards the end of 1778 Mrs. Port brought up her little daughter Georgina, then seven years old, to stay with her great-aunt Delany, and take lessons from London masters. Mrs. Delany had begged that she might have the charge of her niece, and the arrangement seems to have proved in every way a happy one; the small Georgina being, as her aunt frequently affirms, as good as gold, and

no trouble. The child's first letter home does great credit to her seven years, and proves that the relations between parents and children at that date were not so universally distant and formal as is generally supposed.

'I was so happy with your letter, dear mama,' begins Georgina, 'that I longed to write to you, but Mr. Bolton [the writing-master] was cruel, though A. D. [Aunt Delany] is not. I am very happy here. I often think of you, and wish you could now and then step over here just to see how well A. D. and I agree, and that I might kiss my dear mama and ask her blessing. I have seen a number of fine people, and Lady Cowper in all her jewels, with a rose in the middle of her bows. My A. D. insists on my wearing gloves, and tells me I am to take rhubarb—I don't like it, but I will do it because you desire it. Mr. French [the dancing-master] is very tall, makes fine bows, takes a great deal of pains, and says "Bravo!" when I do well. The Duchess of Portland has brought me from Bulstrode all the flowers you can think of, and she asks me every day how my A. D. does.'

Mrs. Delany continued to work at her paper Flora as diligently as she had formerly worked at her painting. The latter pursuit she had not the heart to take up again after her husband's death, and the consequent loss of his approval and encouragement. In July 1779 she wrote down the following short account of the motives which had led to the undertaking of this work:—

'The paper mosaic work was begun in the seventy-fourth year of my age (which I at first only meant as an imitation of a *hortus siccus*) and as an employment and amusement to supply the loss of those which had formerly been a delight to me, but had lost their power of pleasing, being deprived of that friend whose partial approbation was my

pride, and had stampt a value on them. Though the effect of this work was more than I expected, I thought that a whim of my own fancy might fondly beguile my judgment to think better of it than it deserved; and I should have dropped the attempt as vain had not the Duchess Dowager of Portland looked on it with favourable eyes. Her approbation was such a sanction to my undertaking as made it appear of consequence, and gave me courage to go on with confidence. To *her* I owe the spirit of pursuing it with diligence and pleasure. To her I owe more than I dare express, but my heart will ever feel with the utmost gratitude and tenderest affection the honour I have enjoyed in her most generous, steady, and delicate friendship for above forty years. MARY DELANY.

'The same desire, the same ingenious arts
Delighted both, we owned and blessed that power
That joined at once our studies and our hearts.'

Mrs. Delany's remarkable success in her newly-invented art attracted, as has been said, a great deal of attention from her contemporaries. Sir Joseph Banks, the famous naturalist, used to say that her paper representations of flowers were the only imitations of Nature he had ever seen from which he could venture to describe *botanically* any plant without the least fear of making a mistake. Dr. Erasmus Darwin in his *Botanical Garden* alludes to the Flora with about as much accuracy as poetical inspiration in the following lines:—

'So now Delany forms her mimic bowers,
Her paper foliage and her silken flowers;
Her virgin train the tender scissors ply,
Vein the green leaf, the purple petals dye;
Round wiry stems the flaxen tendril bends,
Moss creeps below, and waxen fruit impends.

MRS. DELANY

Cold winter views amid his realms of snow
Delany's vegetable statues blow ;
Smoothes his stern brow, delays his hoary wing,
And eyes with wonder all the blooms of spring.'

Prosaic as this tribute sounds, it yet contains a highly imaginative description of the Flora, which was composed entirely of coloured paper. Lady Llanover gives the following minute account of the inventor's methods:—'Mrs. Delany placed the growing plant before her. Behind it she put a sheet of black paper, doubled in the form of a folding screen, which, forming a dark background, threw out distinctly the outlines of the leaves and flowers. She did not draw the plant, but by her eye cut out each flower, or rather each petal, as it appeared; the lights and shades were afterwards cut out, and laid on, being pasted one over the other. The stamina and leaves were done in the same manner, in various coloured papers, which she used to procure from captains of vessels coming from China, and from paper-stainers, from whom she used to buy pieces of paper in which the colours had run, producing unusual tints. In this manner she procured her materials, but that part of the work which appears likely ever to remain a mystery is the way in which by the eye alone scissors could be directed to cut out the innumerable parts necessary to complete the outline and shading of every leaf, flower, and stem so that they all hung together and fitted each other as if they had been produced instantaneously by the stroke of a magic wand.'

CHAPTER XVI

(1779-1783)

DURING the summer and autumn of this year (1779) there was the usual exchange of neighbourly civilities between Windsor and Bulstrode. In a letter to her little niece, Mrs. Delany describes a visit to the Queen's Lodge on the occasion of the Princess Royal's birthday, when *only* twelve of the royal family were present, Prince William being with the fleet: 'Princess Mary, a most sweet child, was in cherry-coloured tabby, with silver leading-strings; she is about four years old. She could not remember my name; but, making a low curtsey, said, "How do you do, Duchess of Portland's friend? and how does your little niece do? I wish you had brought her." The King carried about in his arms by turns the Princess Sophia and the last prince, Octavius. I never saw more lovely children, nor a more pleasing sight than the King's fondness for them, nor the Queen's, for they seem to have but one mind, and that is to make everything easy and happy about them. The King brought the little Octavius in his arms to me, who held out his hand to play with me, which, on my taking the liberty to kiss, his Majesty made him kiss my cheek.'

A quaint letter from Mrs. Rea, Mrs. Delany's waiting-woman, to little Miss Port describes another royal visit to Bulstrode. 'A Saturday morning,' she writes, 'the

Queen, the Princess Royal, Princess Augusta, and Princess Sophia came here to make a visit to the Duchess; they came in at one and staid till three; and when they whent away, the Queen came up to Mrs. Delany and put a packet into her hand, and said in a most gracious manner she hoped Mrs. Delany would look at that sometimes, and remember her. When your aunt opened it, it was a most beautiful pocket-case, the outside white sattin, worked with gold, the inside—— but it is impossible for me to describe it, it is so elegant; it is lined with pink sattin, and contains a knife, scizzars, pencil, rule, compass, bodkin, and more than I can say, but it is all gold and mother-o'-pearl. At one end there was a little letter-case, that contained a letter directed to Mrs. Delany, written by the Queen's own hand, which she will send a copy of to your mama. Sunday morning the Duchess received a letter from Miss Hambleton to let her know the King and Queen intended her a visit in the evening. They came with the Prince of Wales and three of the princesses. I wish you had been here to see the sight; their attendants carried flambeaux before them, and they made a fine show in the park. Her Grace had the house lighted up in the most magnificent manner; the chandelier in the grate hall had not been lighted for twenty years. Their entertainment was tea, coffee, ices, and fruite. They were all dressed in blue tabby, with white sattin petticotes. The Queen sat on the sofa in the drawing-room, and the Duchess by her; the King took Mrs. Delany by the hand, and seated himself by her, and placed a screen before her, so that the fire might not hurt her eyes. The Princess Augusta plaid on the harpsichord, and the Prince of Wales sung to her. They all seemed very happy, and well pleased with their entertainment. They looked over

Mrs. Delany's nine volumes of flowers, and whent away about half-past ten. My mistress was not in the least fatigued, but highly delighted with the gracious manners of the King and Queen.'

Mrs. Delany returned to her house in St. James's Place for the winter, where she again had the company of her little niece, Georgina Port. A curious old piece of scandal is related in a letter to Mrs. Port, dated December 1779, announcing the death of the second Lord Lyttelton: 'I would fain give you some account of Lord Littleton's sad end; so wicked a wretch hardly breathed, heightened by his having had extraordinary parts, which he basely abused—a good figure, rank, and a great fortune, what an honour he might have been to his family and to his country! Hagley is within a few miles of Mrs. Amphlet's, a widow with a son and two daughters. She was aunt, or cousin-german, to the *good* Lord Littleton, this wretch's father. The late Lord visited there often as a neighbour and relation. One day, in the course of the summer, he dined there, and feigned himself so ill that he must lye there all night. Unfortunately, Mrs. Amphlet was taken very ill in the night, and was confined to her bed for some days, during which time the diabolical scheme was laid. Lord L. returned to Hagley in two or three days, and the day after the elder Miss Amphlet told her mother she must go and inquire after my lord's health. She went, whether with the mother's consent I cannot tell, but at that time she had no suspicion about them.

'A message was sent back that her daughter was so happy where she was that she would not return. Every means was made use of by the poor mother to bring her back, but to no purpose; and, after a series of more circumstances than I can relate, the younger daughter was

inveigled to join their wicked society, and left her mother dying of a broken heart. She is now happily released, and, I believe, died before Lord Littleton, who certainly had a remarkable dream of seeing a bird turned into a woman, who gave him warning of his approaching end. He told his dream to several people, and that he was limited to three days. On the morning of the third day he told several of his acquaintance, being then in town, that the time was nearly expired, and seemed unapprehensive of any further consequence. He carried the two miserable girls and another woman of his society to spend some days at a villa near London, eat a hearty dinner and a supper in a flow of spirits; complained of a pain in his stomach, which lasted but a little while before he died. What a sense of horror if his sad associates had any conscience! He has died rich, and left £500 a piece to those undone girls, the chief of his fortune to his sister, Lady Valencia.'

In June 1780 all London was distracted by the doings of Lord George Gordon, which culminated in the 'No Popery' riots. In a letter to Mrs. Port, dated June 8, Mrs. Delany says: 'On Tuesday last the tumult was so desperate, of which you will be informed in the papers, that nobody knew how it might end. Lady Weymouth was so terrified for the Duchess of Portland, as a disturbance was expected in Priory Gardens, that she entreated her to lie that night at Lady Stamford's, which she did, after spending the evening with me; and yesterday she dined with me, and being assured that all things were quiet in Whitehall, she resolved to return home last night. Poor Lady Weymouth sent all her children yesterday to Ealing, and had the goodness to desire me to go with them, and carry Georgina with me, but I could not do that, as the

Duchess was determined to go that day to Bulstrode, and she insisted on my coming home with her, and bringing the child with me, as some houses in St. James's Place were threatened. . . . Lady Bute is gone out of town, but I fear there will be as little mercy shown to *his* house as to Lord Mansfield's[1] in Bloomsbury Square. Thank God, he and his family are safe and well, but his house with everything in it is *burnt to the ground!* And Kenwood would have met the same fate had not the militia saved it yesterday.'

In November the King sent Mrs. Delany, who was then at Bulstrode, a special message to the effect that he hoped she would be at Gerrard's Cross the following Wednesday to see the stag turned out. Such a royal invitation was not lightly to be disregarded, and so at the age of eighty-one Mrs. Delany went out hunting for the last time. For her little niece's amusement she dictated the following account of her adventures to her waiting-woman, Mrs. Rea:—

'On Wednesday morning, a quarter before ten, the Duchess of Portland stepped into her chaise, and we went to Gerard Cross, about the middle of the Common, by the appointment and command of the King, who came about a quarter of an hour afterwards, with the Prince of Wales and a large retinue. His Majesty came up directly to the Duchess's carriage, most gracious and delighted to see the Duchess out so early. . . . The King himself ordered the spot where the Duchess's chaise should stand to see the stag turned out. At the King's command the stag was set at liberty, and the poor trembling creature bounded over the plain in hopes of escaping from his pursuers, but the dogs and hunters were soon after him, and all out of sight. The Duchess

[1] Lord Chief Justice.

returned home in order to be able to receive the Queen, who immediately followed, before we could pull off our cloaks! We received Her Majesty on the doorstep, but she is so gracious that she makes everything perfectly easy. . . . The Princess Royal did me the honour to ask after you in a very obliging way, if you came to town this winter, what books you read. I said you loved reading better than work, but that you worked when your other lessons were over. Her Royal Highness asked what books you liked. I said you seemed to like history and travels as far as you could understand them, and the *Spectator* and French stories adapted to your age; that your mama was very attentive to you, but her indulgence to me made her spare you to me, though I was afraid I should not be able to attend to you as much as she did. The Princess, who is extremely polite, made me some obliging compliments; and added, she hoped I should be able to attend to you for twenty years to come. Princess Elizabeth, who stood near me, said, "I hope so too, and am sure so does the King and Queen." I would not have you think (though I am very sensible of the honours done me) I tell you this out of vanity, for I feel my own small consequence, but I tell you to show you how such manners become the highest rank, and though so far above us, they are not in those particulars unsuited to our imitation; for civility, kindness, and benevolence (suitable to the different ranks of life) are in everybody's power, from the palace to the cottage.'

Apropos of this last day's hunting, Mrs. Delany related an anecdote of her first run with the hounds, more than sixty years before, which greatly delighted George III. When a young girl, living with her parents in Gloucestershire, she received an invitation to dinner at a house in

the neighbourhood which her mother allowed her to accept. As there was to be company, she was very smartly dressed; and the road being too bad for a carriage, she was mounted on a pillion, behind a steady old servant. On the way they met a pack of hounds; Miss Granville was enchanted, the mettle of the horse was roused, and old John was prevailed upon to join in the chase. The end of the escapade was that the young lady's pink lute-string slip was rent in many places, the smart shoes were lost, and the hat and streamers blown away. She kept her host's dinner waiting; and on her return home in tattered garments, received a severe scolding from Mrs. Granville, insomuch that her first day's hunting cost her many penitential tears.

Among other favours bestowed upon Mrs. Delany by the Queen at this time were a lock of her hair, a nomination of one of Mrs. Port's boys to the Charterhouse, and a pocket-book containing the following note:—

'Without appearing imprudent towards Mrs. Delany, and indiscreet towards her friends (who wish to preserve her, as her excellent qualities so well deserve), I cannot have the pleasure of enjoying her company this winter, which our amiable friend the Duchess of Portland has so frequently and politely indulged me with during the summer. I must therefore desire that Mrs. Delany will wear this little pocket-book in order to remember, at times when no dearer persons are present, a very sincere well-wisher, friend, and affectionate Queen,

'CHARLOTTE.'

The Queen having expressed a wish to learn to spin, Mrs. Delany presented her with a spinning-wheel as a

birthday offering, and accompanied it with the subjoined verses of her own composition :—

'Go, happy wheel ! Amuse her leisure hour,
Whose grace and affability refined
Add lustre to her dignity and power,
And fill with love and awe the grateful mind.'

In 1782 Mrs. Delany was obliged, by reason of her failing sight, to give up her work upon the Flora, which now contained nearly a thousand specimens, many of which were copies of rare flowers and plants that had been sent her from Kew. That she had not lost her former keen interest in art, however, is proved by her kindness to Opie, the portrait-painter, then quite a young man, whom she brought into the notice of the King and Queen, and for whom she obtained many commissions. It was Opie who, at the command of their Majesties, painted the portrait of Mrs. Delany, which hung in their bedroom at Windsor, and is now at Hampton Court.[1] Mrs. Boscawen, writing in September 1782, says: 'Your favoured Opie is still in raptures at the thought of Bulstrode. His portrait of Lady Jerningham did not quite satisfy me, for I concluded it would be perfect, and her person, hands, posture, spinning-wheel, all are so, but the face (or rather, the countenance) does not quite please me.'

Miss Burney's *Cecilia* was published in 1782, and Mrs. Chapone writes a warm commendation of the book to her ancient friend. It was not until January 1783, however, that Miss Burney was introduced to Mrs. Delany, and we read in her diary an account, probably more picturesque than accurate, of what took place on the occasion of their first meeting. Miss Burney went to St. James's Place with

[1] A replica of this portrait was bequeathed by Lady Llanover to the National Portrait Gallery.

Mrs. Chapone. 'Mrs. Delany,' she says, 'was alone in her drawing-room, which is entirely hung round with pictures of her own painting, and ornaments of her own designing. She is still tall, though some of her height may be lost; not much, however, for she is remarkably upright. She has no remains of beauty in feature, but in countenance I never but once saw more, and that was in my own sweet maternal grandmother. Benevolence, softness, piety, are all resident in her face.'

The guest was shown the pictures and the famous Flora, and gratified by allusions to some of the characters in her books. At seven o'clock the Duchess of Portland arrived. 'She is not near so old as Mrs. Delany,' continues Miss Burney, 'nor to me is her face by any means so pleasing; but yet there is sweetness and dignity and intelligence in it. Mrs. Delany received her with the same respectful ceremony as if it was her first visit, though she regularly goes to her every evening. In the course of conversation the Duchess asked Miss Burney's opinion of Mrs. Siddons; and on her expressing her admiration of the actress, observed, "If Miss Burney approves her, no approbation can do her so much credit; for no one can so perfectly judge of character, or of human nature."

'"Ah, ma'am," cried Mrs. Delany archly, "and does your Grace remember protesting that you would never read *Cecilia*?"

'"Yes," said she, laughing, "I declared that five volumes could never be attacked, but since I began I have read it three times."

'"Oh, terrible!" cried I, "to make them out fifteen."

'"The reason," continued she, "I held out so long against reading them was remembering the cry there was in favour of *Clarissa* and *Sir Charles Grandison* when they

came out, and those I never could read. I was teased into trying both of them, but I was disgusted with their tediousness, and could not read eleven letters with all the effort I could make."

'"But if your grace had gone on with *Clarissa*," said Mrs. Chapone, "the latter part must have affected you and charmed you."

'"Oh, I hate anything so dismal! Everybody that did read it had melancholy faces for a week. *Cecilia* is as pathetic as I can bear, and more sometimes; yet in the midst of the sorrow there is a spirit in the writing, a fire in the whole composition that keep off that heavy depression given by Richardson. Cry, to be sure we did. Oh, Mrs. Delany, shall you ever forget how we cried? But then we had so much laughter to make us amends, we were never left to sink under our concern."

'"For my part," said Mrs. Chapone, "when I first read it I did not cry at all; I was in an agitation that half killed me, that shook all my nerves, and made me unable to sleep at nights from the suspense I was in."

'"I only wish," said the duchess, "Miss Burney could have been in some corner when Lord Weymouth, the Bishop of Exeter, Mr. Lightfoot, Mrs. Delany, and I were all discussing the point of the name. Nothing could have been debated more warmly, but what cooled us a little at last was Mr. Lightfoot's thinking we were going to quarrel, and while Mrs. Delany and I were disputing about Mrs. Delville, he very gravely said, 'Why, ladies, this is only a matter of imagination. Don't be so earnest.'"

'"Ah, ma'am," said Mrs. Delany, "how hard your grace was upon Mrs. Delville, so elegant, so sensible, so judicious, so charming a woman."

'"Oh, I hate her," cried the duchess, "resisting that

sweet Cecilia; coaxing her, too, all the time with such hypocritical flattery."

'"I shall never forget," said Mrs. Delany, "your grace's earnestness when we came to that part where Mrs. Delville bursts a blood-vessel. Down dropped the book, and just with the same energy as if your grace had heard some real and important news you called out, 'I'm glad of it with all my heart.'"

'"What disputes, too," said Mrs. Chapone, "there are about Briggs. I was in a room some time ago where somebody said there could be no such character, and a poor little city man who was there started up and said, 'But there is, though, for I'se one myself.'"

'"The Harrels — oh, then the Harrels!" cried Mrs. Delany.

'"If you speak of the Harrels, and of the morality of the book," said the duchess, with a solemn sort of voice, "we shall, indeed, never give Miss Burney her due—so striking, so pure, so genuine, so instructive."

'"Yes," cried Mrs. Chapone, "let us complain how we will of the torture she has given our nerves, we must all join in saying she has bettered us by every line."

'"No book," said Mrs. Delany, "ever was so useful as this, because none other that is so good was ever so much read."

'I think I need now write no more,' continues Miss Burney—'I could, indeed, hear no more—for this last so serious praise from characters so respectable, so moral, and so aged quite affected me; and though I had wished a thousand times during this discourse to run out of the room, when they finally gave this solemn sanction to the meaning and intention of my writing, I found it not without difficulty that I could keep the tears out of my eyes.'

In September 1783, Mrs. Boscawen describes some of her summer wanderings in a letter to Mrs. Delany. 'I have seen Lady Weymouth and her three eldest daughters. I could not leave Longleat without wishing to pay my respects to its noble mistress; she was extremely obliging. We talked of Bulstrode, you may be sure, and she told me all your expeditions. I did not tell Lady Weymouth all I thought of Longleat, lest it should sound like flattery, but to me it appeared the very finest place I ever saw in my life. The sun shone perfectly bright, the water was all silver, the lights and shades of the fine trees were beautiful—in short, the whole so entirely excited my admiration, the superb, majestic structure being unique, that I dare say I shall never see anything again that I like so well. We spent all yesterday at Mr. Hoare's, and were lucky in a fine day to sit and tarry at the different stations. There is an immense high tower built at the extremity of his plantation, called Alfred's Tower, which overlooked the whole country. There is a convent in the woods that you would like very well; it has fine painted glass in the windows, and a picture which belonged to one of the altars of Glastonbury Abbey, which shuts up with doors; but perhaps after all it is only an imitation, for I am easily taken in on these occasions, and believe implicitly the tales of my cicerones. To-day we have been to see Mr. Beckford's Fonthill, where you would have been provoked to see fine Titians pell-mell with daubings of Capali: the mixture of good and bad pictures was hideous. Thank God we go home to-morrow, for my eyes are soon satisfied with seeing, and I require more tranquillity than can be had in a wayfaring life, besides that seeing Longleat first I was satisfied, and persuaded that nothing I saw afterwards would please me so well.'

Mrs. Delany usually kept her old Dublin friend, Mrs. Frances Hamilton, well posted up in her doings, and more especially in all matters connected with her intercourse with royalty. In a letter written from Bulstrode on October 10th, she says, 'A few days after our arrival here the duchess and I were sitting in the long gallery busy with our different employments, when, without any ceremony, his Majesty walked up to our table unperceived and unknown till he came close to us. You may believe we were at first a little fluttered, but his courteous manner soon made him a welcome guest. He came to inform the duchess of the queen's perfect recovery from her lying-in, which made him doubly welcome. . . . Last Thursday, a little before twelve o'clock, word was brought that the royal family were coming up the park, and immediately afterwards two coaches and six, with the king on horseback, and a large retinue came up to the hall door. . . . They were in the drawing-room before I was sent for, where I found the queen very busy showing a very elegant machine to the duchess, a frame for weaving fringe of a new and most delicate structure; it would take up as much paper as has already been written upon to describe it minutely, yet it is of such simplicity as to be very useful. You will easily imagine the grateful feeling I had when the queen presented it to me to make up some knotted fringe which she saw me about. The king at the same time said that he must contribute something to my work, and presented me with a gold knotting shuttle of most exquisite workmanship and taste; and I am at this time, while dictating, knotting white silk to fringe the bag which is to contain it.'

CHAPTER XVII

(1783-1785)

In the winter of 1783, Miss Hamilton, one of the ladies-in-waiting to the queen, and niece of the Sir William Hamilton who married Emma Hart, paid a long visit to Bulstrode, and gives in her diary an interesting account of the conversation and occupations of the two venerable ladies, the duchess and Mrs. Delany. On December 5th she writes: 'Went to dear Mrs. Delany at half-past nine. She told me how extremely happy I had made her and the duchess by my consent to stay till they went to town. How truly flattering the praise of this most venerable and amiable woman! At two o'clock Mrs. Delany and I went to her room to eat oysters. We went to dinner about half-past four, and when we came out of the dining-room we had a hearty laugh, and ran a race! After tea I read *Evelina*, which I *finished*, and at ten the duchess went to her room to finish a letter to Mrs. Boscawen, and tell her we had gone through *Evelina*, the book that she had desired us to read.'

This entry is certainly rather mysterious when taken in connection with the enthusiasm displayed by the duchess and her friends for Miss Burney's work during the interview that had taken place the year before. Miss Burney had a vivid imagination, but it is difficult to believe that she could have invented the whole of the conversation on the subject that is recorded in her diary.

Miss Hamilton continues: 'Mrs. Delany said how cautious young women should be what society they entered into, and particularly with whom they appeared in public. Told me an anecdote of herself when she was young and first married to Mr. Pendarves; gave me an account of the Hell Fire Club, which consisted of about a dozen persons of fashion of both sexes, some of the females unmarried, and the horrid impieties these were guilty of: they used to read and ridicule the Scriptures; and their conversation was blasphemous to the last degree; the character of one of the members of this club, a Mr. Howe, and an account of his death, which Dr. Friend gave Mrs. Delany the day he died. Mrs. D. was dining at Somerset House when Dr. Friend came in, quite overcome with the horrid scene he had just quitted; said he left this miserable wretch expiring, uttering the most horrid imprecations, and, though denying his belief in anything sacred, said he knew he should burn in hell for ever! . . .

'The conversation turned on the famous Duchess of Marlborough; among other things, that, although she appeared affected in the highest degree at the death of her grand-daughter, the Duchess of Bedford, she sent the day after she died for the jewels she had given her, saying she had only lent them. The answer was that she had said she would never demand those jewels again, except she danced at Court. Her reply was, "then she would be—— if she would not dance at Court." She behaved in the most extravagant manner, her grief, notwithstanding, most violent in its appearance. She was found one day lying prostrate on the ground, and a lady who went to see her had like to have fallen over her, the room being dark. The duchess said she was praying, and that she lay thus upon the ground, being too wicked to kneel.

When her son died, who was a fine promising youth, her grief was unbounded; her vanity was wounded, the future hope of an ambitious mind was destroyed. She used, by way of mortification, to dress herself like a beggar, and sit with some miserable wretches in the cloisters at Westminster Abbey. She used to say she was very certain she should go to heaven, and, as her ambition went even beyond the grave, that she knew she should have one of the highest seats.

'Many other anecdotes were told, and the duchess showed us some original letters written to her grandfather, Mr. Harley, by the famous Lord Bolingbroke, and the Duchess of Marlborough. Those of Lord Bolingbroke were witty and impious, and full of the most flattering encomiums. Mrs. Delany said she remembered Lord Bolingbroke's person, that he was handsome, had a fine address, but was a great drinker, and swore horribly. She remembered his going once to her uncle, Sir John Stanley's, at Northend, his being very drunk, and going to the greenhouse, where he threw himself on a couch. A message arrived to say he was waited for at the council: he roused himself, snatched up his green bag of papers, and flew to business. People used to say that no man was ever so *early* or so active as Lord B. when he was in *place*. The truth being that he used to sit up drinking all night, and not having been in bed, he would put a wet napkin on his forehead and eyes to cool the heat and headache occasioned by his intemperance, and then he appeared and attended to business with as much ease as if he had lived the most temperate life. . . .'

'*December* 14.

'Went to Mrs. Delany's room at half-past nine. We talked upon religious topics. She told me she had known

the two Mr. Wesleys (the Methodist preachers); she knew them when they were young men, they lived near her sister when they were students at Oxford. They were of a serious turn, and associated with such as were so. These brothers joined some other young men at Oxford, and used to meet of a Sunday evening and read the Scriptures, and find out objects of charity to relieve. This was a happy beginning, but the vanity of being singular, and growing enthusiasts, made them endeavour to gain proselytes, and adopt that system of religious doctrine that many reasonable persons thought pernicious. . . .

'After tea the duchess read many interesting anecdotes out of her MS. book. The Duchess of Marlborough (the famous) said she never had a present of a jewel from Queen Anne; and 'tis notorious that when news came of the victory of Blenheim the queen gave her a picture of the Duke of Marlborough, covered with a flat diamond with brilliant edges, which cost eight thousand pounds: it is now in the possession of the Duke of Montagu's daughter, the present Duchess of Buccleuch. When the Duchess of Marlborough was in disgrace she went to Holland; before she left she made presents to her friends, and, among other things, she gave a Mrs. Higgin a picture of Queen Anne which the queen had given her. It had been set round with jewels; those she took care to take from it. Mrs. Higgin, knowing the duchess gave her this because she had no value for it, and not out of any mark of regard, and sensibly conscious she was not worthy of the honour of having it in her possession, offered it to Lord Oxford, who (in a genteel way) gave her a hundred guineas for it, and it is now at Welbeck. The Duke and Duchess of Marlborough had upwards of 90,000 per annum in *places*, besides Blenheim and all their family and children in places. They would

not even pay the taxes of the house granted them at Whitehall, and when the duke made a campaign he was always furnished with every material of linen, etc., at the queen's expense. The Prince Eugene once, when he received a letter from the duke, gave it to another to read to him, as it was a difficult hand to read; and the person said: "The duke puts no tittles upon the 'i's.'" "Oh," said the prince, "it saves his grace's ink."'

There are several tantalising entries in the diary to the effect that 'Mrs. Delany told me many particulars relating to Swift, Mrs. Johnstone, Vanessa, etc.,' or 'the duchess told me some remarkable anecdotes of Pope, Young, Voltaire, etc.,' and one wishes that the diarist had been imbued with more of the spirit of a Boswell. After her return to town Miss Hamilton became a frequent visitor at Mrs. Delany's house, and on one occasion met Miss Burney and Mrs. Carter, when, she relates, those learned ladies discussed Rousseau's *Eloise*, and Mrs. Carter declared that Rousseau was a far more dangerous writer than Voltaire. It was through the negotiations of Miss Hamilton that the Duchess of Portland bought the famous Barberini vase from Sir William Hamilton.

In May 1784 began the first series of performances in commemoration of Handel, held in Westminster Abbey, and Mrs. Delany was able to be present at four of the concerts. She still seems to have kept up her interest in the art and literature of the day, for we find her writing to Miss Hamilton: 'I hear that the *School for Scandal* is to be got in Ireland; I beg you will procure me two copies. It has not yet been published in England.' In the same letter she gives the following account of a visit to the queen's house to hear Mrs. Siddons read *The Provoked Husband*: 'I obeyed the royal summons, and

was much entertained. She (Mrs. Siddons) fully answered my expectations, and her person and manners are perfectly agreeable. . . . Mrs. Siddons read standing, and had a desk with candles before her; she behaved with great propriety, and read two acts of *The Provoked Husband*, which was abridged by leaving out Sir Francis and Lady Wronghead's parts. But she introduced John Moody's account of the journey, and read it admirably. The part of Lord and Lady Townley's reconciliation she worked up finely, and made it very affecting. She also read Queen Katherine's last speech in *King Henry VIII.* She was allowed three pauses to go into the next room to refresh herself for half an hour each time. After she was dismissed their Majesties detained the company for some time to *talk over* what had passed, which was not the least agreeable part of the entertainment.'

In July Mrs. Delany appears to have been in town and indisposed, for the Duchess of Portland writes to her from Margate, 'I am truly grieved to hear you have been ill, but depend on you assuring me you are much better. I think you were in the right to go to town, but is not the smell of paint disagreeable to you? And why would you not go to Whitehall, which you know, my dearest friend, is at your disposal? . . . Mr. Swanison is a good acquisition; he shot three or four birds for me yesterday, and is gone out to-day trawling, or I should have gone to see his collection. And he has introduced a *friseur*, not for the purpose of curling my hair, but of stuffing birds. I have a charming horned owl sitting by me that I have purchased of him.'

In the autumn Mrs. Delany procured, at the king's request, a catalogue of Mr. Granville's valuable collection of Handel's music. The catalogue was returned with a

note from George III. in his own handwriting: 'The king is much pleased with the very correct manner in which Mrs. Delany has obligingly executed the commission of obtaining an exact catalogue of Mr. Granville's collection of Mr. Handel's music, and desires she will forward it to Dr. Burney; at the same time, as Mrs. Delany has communicated Mr. Granville's willingness of letting the king see those volumes that are not in the list of his original collection, he is desired at any convenient opportunity to let the following ones be sent to town, and great care shall be taken that they shall be without damage returned.' Here follows a list of half-a-dozen volumes.

In February the king returned some of the volumes that had been lent, and in another autograph letter desires that Mrs. Delany will express everything that is proper to her nephew for communications that have been so agreeable. 'The king hopes when the spring is far enough advanced that he may have the pleasure of having that song performed at the queen's house to the satisfaction of Mrs. Delany, not forgetting to have it introduced by the overture to "Radamistus."—GEORGE R.'

In July 1785, the Dowager-Duchess of Portland died at Bulstrode after only a few days' illness. Horace Walpole, writing to Mrs. Dickenson, *née* Hamilton, on July 19th, says, 'By a postscript in a letter I have just received from Mr. Keate, he tells me that the Duchess of Portland is dead! I did hear at Ditton on Sunday that she had been thought dead, but was much better—still, as it comes from Mr. Keate, and you was so much alarmed when I saw you (and, indeed, as I thought her so much altered), I fear it is but too true. You will forgive me, therefore, for troubling you with inquiring about poor Mrs. Delany! It would be to no purpose to send to her house.'

On July 24th Mrs. Sandford, formerly Sally Chapone, wrote to Mrs. Hamilton, 'Mrs. Delany had been with the Duchess of Portland about twelve days at Bulstrode when the sad event of her grace's death happened. The next day Mrs. Delany came to town, and though in *great affliction*, I am happy to add is in good health, which not failing her, and her having so many kind friends about her, we flatter ourselves is not likely to do so. As her affliction is so perfectly calm and rational as to allow her to accept the unwearied attentions they offer her, Mrs. Delany has much consolation from the cordial civilities and kindnesses she has received from the Duke and Duchess of Portland. The duke's own expression has been that "he should ever see his mother in Mrs. Delany," and should always think himself fulfilling his late mother's wishes when he obeys her commands, or contributes to her satisfaction. The king and queen have been as constant and regular in their solicitous inquiries after Mrs. Delany since the duchess's death as they were after the excellent friends during her grace's late illness, which was of a complicated kind. But the immediate cause of her death was a bilious complaint which culminated in a mortification. . . . We understand the duchess's remains are to be interred on Friday or Saturday next at Westminster Abbey, where the late duke is buried, as well as all the Harley family.'

The duchess's will, in which she left her old friend nothing more substantial than two or three pictures and snuff-boxes, seems to have caused some surprise to outsiders, though none to Mrs. Delany herself, who had repeatedly urged the duchess, when the question of a legacy was discussed between them, not to think of leaving her any money, more especially as Lord Edward

Bentinck and Lord Weymouth were terribly in debt, and had even reminded her that, however great her wealth, she had in her own family legitimate claims for its entire and exclusive appropriation. The only change in Mrs. Delany's circumstances that was caused by her friend's death was the loss of the summer retreat at Bulstrode, which she had enjoyed for so many years. This, however, was speedily made good by the king, who presented her with a house at Windsor, and desired that she would always move thither when the Court moved from town. At the same time, he bestowed upon her an allowance of three hundred a year, which good Queen Charlotte used to bring half-yearly in a pocket-book, in order that it might not be docked by the tax-collector.

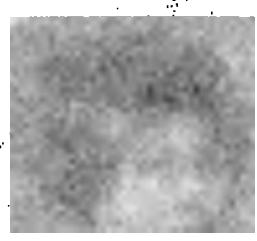
Mrs. Walsingham, writing to Mrs. Delany about this time, says, 'I think myself extremely obliged to you for desiring Mrs. Boscawen to communicate to me the very delicate, noble, and friendly manner in which their Majesties have expressed the sense they entertain of your merits, and the feelings they have for the very great loss you have sustained. I honour and admire them beyond what words can speak; and really I could not read the account without a sort of shivering and tears coming into my eyes, that prove how we are penetrated, even to our mental parts, by acts of generosity and kindness. I felt much anxiety, till I came to the conclusion, and found you had determined to take the house, and, in return for her Majesty's attention, to give her one of the greatest and rarest of all pleasures, the having a friend for a neighbour. Such instances of friendship are rare in their Majesties' exalted rank; and I congratulate them on having felt a pleasure so few of royal race have ever known. To you it cannot but have given pleasure,

though you were so deeply plunged in sorrow, and these unexpected pleasing circumstances that sometimes break out like rays of sunshine on our most clouded, unhappy days, put me in mind of an admirable saying of Lord Bacon's, that "man's necessity is God's opportunity."'

Evidently no time had been lost in presenting the gracious gift, for the duchess only died on July 17th, and on August 19th Miss Port, who now lived almost entirely with her great-aunt, writes to her mother, 'Though the king is overseer (which of course must hurry the workmen), we find it will be three weeks before the house at Windsor will be ready, and three weeks longer in London at this time of year would be bad for A. D.'s health. This the queen has considered, for which reason her Majesty kindly sent Miss Planta to say that till the house was fit for our reception, she hoped my aunt would be in an apartment at Windsor; and on my A. D.'s introducing me to Miss Planta, she said that the queen named that young lady particularly, and her Majesty expects me too.'

During the month of August, Mrs. Delany had a sharp attack of illness, and it was just after her recovery that Fanny Burney, who, as we have seen, had been introduced by Mrs. Chapone about two years before, was invited to stay in St. James's Place, and made a very favourable impression. Writing to Mrs. Hamilton, Mrs. Delany says, 'I have had with me, ever since my nephews were obliged to leave me, Miss Burney, the author of *Evelina* and *Cecilia*, which, excellent as they are, are her meanest praise. Her admirable understanding, tender affection, and sweetness of manners, make her invaluable to those who have the happiness to know her. . . .

'I employ my secretary just now to add some new proofs I have received of their Majesties' goodness towards me.



Portrait. Mary Ann Bell. Aft. Dabaug. Grav. Line

Astley (my servant) I sent to Windsor last Thursday, to see what conveniences there might be wanting in the house that their Majesties have been so gracious as to give me; when there, she received the king's command that I was only to bring myself and niece, clothes and attendants, as stores of every kind would be laid in for me.'

On September 3rd, Queen Charlotte wrote: 'My dear Mrs. Delany will be glad to hear that I am charged by the king to summon her to her new abode at Windsor for Tuesday next, when she will find all the most essential parts of the house ready, excepting some little trifles that it will be better for Mrs. Delany to direct herself in person or by her little deputy, Miss Port. I need not, I hope, add that I shall be extremely glad and happy to see so amiable an inhabitant in this our sweet retreat, and wish very sincerely that our dear Mrs. Delany may enjoy every blessing among us that her merits deserve, and that we may long enjoy her amiable company. Amen. These are the true sentiments of my dear Mrs. Delany's very affectionate queen, CHARLOTTE.'

Mrs. Delany wrote the following account of her arrival at Windsor to her friend Mrs. Hamilton: 'I arrived here about eight o'clock in the evening and found his Majesty in the house ready to receive me. I threw myself at his feet, indeed unable to utter a word; he raised and saluted me, and said he meant not to stay longer than to desire I would order everything that could make the house comfortable and agreeable to me, and then retired. Truly, I found nothing wanting, as it is as pleasant and commodious as I could wish it to be, with a very pretty garden, which joins that of the Queen's Lodge. The next morning her Majesty sent one of her ladies to know

how I had rested, and how I was in health, and whether her coming would not be troublesome. I was lame, and therefore could not go down to the door as I ought to have done, but her Majesty came upstairs. Our meeting was mutually affecting; she well knew the value of what I had lost, and it was some time after we were seated before either of us could speak. She repeated in the strongest terms her wish and the king's, that I should be as easy and happy as they could possibly make me; that they waived all ceremony, and desired to come to me as friends! The queen also delivered me a paper from the king: it contained the first quarter of £300 per annum, which his majesty allows me out of his privy purse. Their majesties have drunk tea with me five times, and the princesses three. They generally stay two hours or longer. In short, I have either seen them or heard of them every day, but I have not yet been at the Queen's Lodge, though they have expressed impatience for me to come, as I have still so sad a drawback on my spirits that I must decline that honour till I am better able to enjoy it, and they have the goodness not to press me. Their visits here are paid in the most quiet, private manner, like those of the most consoling, disinterested friends; so that I may truly say they are a royal cordial, and I see very few people besides. I have been three times in the king's private chapel at early prayers, where the royal family constantly attend, and they walk home to breakfast afterwards, whilst I am conveyed in a very elegant chair which the king has made me a present of for that purpose.'

Lady Llanover, in a private note, observes that 'the letters to Mrs. Hamilton from Mrs. Delany were chiefly dictated to her maid as a journal of Court news to amuse Mrs. Hamilton, which must be taken into consideration

to account for the stiffness of style and absence of all but praise in the accounts given. But when this is considered, together with Mrs. Delany's true and just feelings of affection for the treatment she experienced from the royal family, together also with the phraseology of the times of those about Court, these letters will not be considered as overstrained panegyrics, as they otherwise might.'

Mr. Frederick Montagu, writing to Mrs. Delany about the same time, says, 'Your royal friends have combined private regard and affection with princely munificence—and I will say, though you are the grand-daughter of Sir Bevil Granville, that none of the Stuarts, male or female, would have done so well!'

In October of this year it was decided that John Dewes of Calwich should take the name of Granville. Mrs. Delany writes to her nephew, 'I have always thought it was laudable and proper that the names of respectable families should be kept up, and not allowed to sink into oblivion; especially by a descendant of so worthy and great a man as Sir Bevil Granville, who died for his king and country. I some time ago mentioned this; you apprehended it was not particularly my brother's desire you should take his name, but such reasons have started since as I am sure would have convinced my brother Granville that it ought to be done. These urgent reasons, which I cannot explain in a letter, and must be quite between ourselves, are relating to Earl Temple's family, and though it may be a matter of indifference to yourself it may prove of consequence to your descendants. Upon the birth of your son I thought it more incumbent on you to take it into consideration. . . .'

Mrs. Delany's reasons evidently had weight with her

nephew, for on October 29th Court Dewes writes from Windsor to his brother John:

'Dear Brother Granville,—For, after having received his majesty's commands to call you so for the future, I don't know whether it would not be a misdemeanour in me to do otherwise! To be serious, I think from the time you receive this letter you may assume the name. The king was here last night; he called me to him, and said he heard that Mrs. Delany and your family wished you should take the name of Granville, and that you desired it yourself. The king said he thought it very proper, and bid me for the future call you Granville; and the queen in a conversation afterwards with Mrs. Delany about your family called your wife "Mrs. Granville"; so I will, if you think proper, write to Pardon to prepare the instrument and get it registered.'

CHAPTER XVIII

(1786-1788)

THE account given by Madame D'Arblay in her Diary of the intimate relations that existed between herself and her venerable friend during her period of service at Windsor seems to have given some offence to Mrs. Delany's family, and also to her old servant, Mrs. Astley, who lived till 1832. The head and front of the 'little Burney's' offending consisted of her statement that Mrs. Delany had been partly supported by the Duchess of Portland, and also that she (Fanny Burney) had helped Mrs. Delany to sort her letters and papers with a view to putting them into shape for an autobiography. Mrs. Astley writes with considerable severity of authors who allow their imagination overmuch licence, and make mountains out of mole-hills.

'Except a small basket of vegetables once a week,' declares Mrs. Astley, 'not anything once in a month was sent by the Duchess of Portland, who never had company at her own house. She drank tea in St. James's Place all the winter, when Mrs. Delany invited those whom the duchess liked to meet. I had to make tea at many different times (and a pound of fine tea at sixteen shillings a pound was gone in no time), with cakes and etcs. As to money, I am certain not even the present of the least trifle did the duchess ever give Mrs. Delany; but her

spending the summer at Bulstrode, and giving her delightful society so entirely to herself, so offended Mr. Granville, when he asked her to meet some particular friends, that upon her refusal he altered his will, and after awarding her £300 a year for life, he left her nothing. . . . As to Madame Arblay's looking over Mrs. Delany's letters and papers, I doubt the truth of it with good reason, for, more than a fortnight before we left St. James's Place, I was employed upon them every morning, in examining and burning a large box of letters, which it grieved me to destroy, as some of them were written by the first people in the world; but I was obliged to obey, and observed at the time that the box of letters would have been worth a fortune to any one were they published. "That is what I want to prevent," was the answer. But if Madame D'Arblay happened to look over one letter or MS., that was enough for an authoress to build upon. . . . I think Madame D'Arblay has mentioned very few of Mrs. Delany's friends. She had the first interest in the kingdom. During Lord Shelburne's time in office she obtained several good situations for different people. She often wrote to Lord Thurlow in favour of clergymen, and never thought anything of her own trouble when there was a chance of doing good, and was never more happy than when she could bring into notice young artists who promised to excel. Opie and Lawrence owed her much.' Mrs. Astley concludes her strictures with the expression of her belief that Madame D'Arblay had a great regard for Mrs. Delany, but that she was so much in the habit of composing fictions in her novels that she was not to be depended upon when she desired to work up an effect or to produce an impression.

It was in the year 1786 that the king and queen, wishing to make Dr. Burney some amends for his disappointment in not having been appointed master of the king's band, consulted Mrs. Delany as to the advisability of offering Miss Burney the post of dresser, with which that of reader might be combined. Mrs. Delany having formed, as has been seen, a strong attachment to Miss Burney, warmly recommended her to their Majesties. As we know, from Madame D'Arblay's Diary, the appointment was not altogether a success. Miss Burney suffered much at being separated from her friends, her health was not strong enough for the arduous life, she had little manual dexterity, and her shyness prevented her from reading aloud in an audible voice. Her presence at Windsor, however, was a great pleasure to Mrs. Delany, who, in a letter to Mrs. Hamilton, says: 'An event has taken place which gives me great satisfaction. I am sure you are acquainted with the novel entitled *Cecilia*, much admired for its good sense, variety of character, and delicacy of sentiment. There is nothing good, amiable, or agreeable in the book that is not possessed by the author of it, Miss Burney. I have now been acquainted with her two or three years. Her extreme diffidence of herself, notwithstanding her great genius and the applause she has met with, adds lustre to her excellencies, and all improve on acquaintance. In the course of the last year she has been so good as to spend a few weeks with me at Windsor, which gave the queen an opportunity of seeing and speaking to her. One of the principal ladies that attends the queen's person as dresser is going to retire into her own country, being in too bad a state of health to continue her honourable and delightful employment (for such it must be near such a queen). Miss Burney

is to be the happy successor, chosen without any particular recommendation from any one.'

'Miss Burney,' says Lady Llanover, 'was so elated by this appointment that she gradually lost all consciousness of her actual or relative position. She lived in an ideal world, of which she imagined herself the centre. She fancied that all the equerries were in love with her, although she was really the constant object of their ridicule. Queen Charlotte used to complain to Mrs. Delany that Miss Burney could not learn to tie the bow of her necklace on court days without giving her pain by tying the hair at the back of her neck in with it. Certainly, Miss Burney's situation was anomalous. As a dresser she had a fixed subordinate position, as a successful novel-writer she had an undefined celebrity, and though, as the daughter of a music-master, she had previously no individual position, yet the great respect felt for Dr. Burney reflected upon her. She had a large share of vanity and imagination, and made many mistakes in her various representations of her leading characters.'

In a letter to Mrs. Hamilton, dated July 3rd, 1786, Mrs. Delany gives the following sketch of her circumstances and mode of life at this time: 'My health holds out wonderfully in the midst of many trying circumstances, but I endeavour to look forward with hope and comfort to that place where the weary are at rest, and enjoy the many undeserved blessings still held out to me. During my short stay in London in the winter, many alterations were made in my house here which my royal benefactors thought would make it more commodious to me; and it is now a most complete, elegant, and comfortable dwelling, and I am hourly receiving marks of

attention and kindness that cannot be expressed. The constant course of my life at present, from which I vary very little, is as follows: I seldom miss going to early prayers at the king's chapel at eight o'clock, where I never fail to see their Majesties and all the royal family. . . . When chapel is over all the congregation make a line in the great portico till their Majesties have passed; for they always walk to chapel and back again, and speak to everybody of consequence as they pass; and it is a delightful sight to see so much beauty, dignity, and condescension united as they are in this royal family. I come home for breakfast generally about nine o'clock, and then take the air for two hours. The rest of the morning is devoted to business and the company of my particular friends; but I admit no formal visitors, as I really have not time or spirits for it. My afternoons I keep entirely to myself, that I may have no interruption whenever my royal neighbours condescend to visit me: their usual time of coming is between six and seven, and they generally stay till between eight and nine. They always drink tea here, and my niece has the honour of giving it to all the royal family, as they will not suffer me to do it. The queen always places me on the sofa by her, and the king, when he sits down, sits next the sofa. Indeed, their visits are not limited to the afternoons, for they often call on me in the morning, and take me as I am.'

Of one of these informal visits Miss Port, who was then about fifteen, gives a description in a letter to her father: 'We had the three youngest princesses to breakfast with us during their majesties' absence last week, and I entreated Princess Mary to play a lesson of Handel's that mamma does—I gave her that as my reason for asking for it; and

then she, with all the sweetness in the world, played it twice. When Princess Mary had finished, Princess Sophia said, "Now I will play to you if you like," and immediately played the Hallelujah Chorus in the Messiah, and she and Princess Mary sang it. P. Mary has really a fine voice, and P. Sophia a sweet but weak one. So between them both I was highly gratified, and I wished for mamma to hear and see them, for they looked like little angels. They are very, very fair, with fine blue eyes, and hair exactly like Fanny's, which they have a vast deal of, and which curls all down their backs. They go without caps, and are so engaging in their behaviour that everybody must love them, and admire those who made them what they are.'

In September an attempt was made by a lunatic to assassinate George III. Of this occurrence Mrs. Delany writes to Mrs. Hamilton, 'I am sure you must be sensible how thankful I am to Providence for the late wonderful escape of his Majesty from the stroke of assassination. The king would not suffer anybody to inform the queen of that event till he could show himself in person to her. He returned to Windsor as soon as the Council was over. When his Majesty entered the queen's dressing-room he found her with the two eldest princesses; and entering in an animated manner, he said, "Here I am, safe and well!" The queen suspected from this saying that some accident had happened, on which he informed her of the whole affair. The queen stood struck and motionless for some time, till the princesses burst into tears, on which she immediately found relief. Joy soon succeeded this agitation of mind, on the assurance that the person was insane, which took off all aggravating suspicion; and it has been the means of showing the whole kingdom that the king has the hearts of his subjects. Their Majesties sent im-

mediately to my house to give orders that I should not be told of it till next morning, for fear that the agitation should give me a bad night. The Dowager Lady Spencer was in the house with me, and went with me to early prayers next morning at eight o'clock, and after chapel she separated herself from me, and had a long conference with the king and queen. I was commanded in the evening to attend them at the lodge, Lady Spencer having, at the Majesties' desire, told me all the affair. My happiness in being with them was much increased by seeing the fulness of their joy.'

In November Horace Walpole sent Mrs. Delany a new edition of his *Anecdotes of Painting*, with the following note: 'Mr. Walpole having been called upon for a new edition of the *Anecdotes of Painting*, could not, in a history of English Arts, resist the agreeable occasion of doing justice to one who has founded a new branch. He hopes, therefore, that Mrs. Delany will forgive the liberty he has taken of recording her name in vol. ii. page 242, and that she will please to consider how cruel it would have been for him to be denied the satisfaction of mentioning her only because he has the honour and happiness of her acquaintance.'

The notice appears in connection with the allusion to Petitot's picture of himself, which was bequeathed by the Duchess of Portland to Mrs. Delany: 'a lady of excellent taste, who, at the age of seventy-four, invented the art of paper mosaic, with which material (coloured) she executed in eight years, within twenty of one thousand various flowers and flowering shrubs with a precision and truth unparalleled.'

So close was the attachment of the royal family to their friend and neighbour that they could not bear to be

parted from her even during their fortnightly visits to Kew. In a letter to Mrs. Hamilton, dated December 25th, 1786, Mrs. Delany says: 'I believe you know nothing of my flights to Kew, which is about ten miles from this place. The royal family once a fortnight take Kew in their way to London. Their Majesties were so gracious as to hint their wish for my spending some days at Kew when they were there, and to make it completely agreeable and commodious, engaged Mr. and Mrs. Smelt, who live there, to invite me to their house, a pleasure of itself that would have given me wings for the undertaking. I availed myself of the command of the one and the invitation of the other, and spent part of two weeks there. I think you can hardly be a stranger to the character of Mr. Smelt,[1] a man that has the honour of being *friend to the king*, and who has testified to the world by his disinterested and steady behaviour how worthy he is of such a distinction. His character is of the most noble and delicate kind, and deserves the pen of a Clarendon to do justice to it. Mrs. Smelt is a very friendly, sensible, agreeable woman. Their house is convenient and elegant, situated on the banks of the Thames, open to all its beauties, and guarded from all its inconveniences, and within a short walk from the Royal Lodge. They were visited more than once a day by their Majesties, which pleasure I had the honour of partaking. We were appointed to dine every day at Miss Burney's table at the lodge. It is very magnificent, and the society very agreeable, of about eight or ten persons belonging to their Majesties. About nine the king generally walked into the room, addressing everybody, and after that commanded me and Mrs. Smelt

[1] Deputy-tutor to the Prince of Wales, 1771-81.

to follow him to the queen's apartment, where we drank tea and stayed till near ten o'clock.'

The following amusing little incident, which occurred during one of those flights to Kew, is related in a letter from Mrs. Delany's housekeeper to her mistress's old friend, Mrs. Anne Viney: 'Their Majesties stayed at Kew during the Commemoration performances in June 1787, and brought Mrs. Delany with them. On one of the days when there was no music the king went to Windsor. As he was walking on the terrace, he thought he would go into Mrs. Delany's, and he knocked at a room door. A young lady (I suppose Miss Port) was sitting in the room, and said, "Who is there?" The voice answered, "It is me." Then said she, "*Me* may stay where he is." He knocked again, and she again said, "Who is there?" The voice answered, "It is me." Then said she, "*Me* is impertinent, and may go about his business." Upon the knocking being repeated a third time, some person who was with her advised her to open the door, and see who it could be. When, to her great astonishment, who should it be but the king himself! All she could utter was, "What shall I say?" "Nothing at all," said his Majesty. "You was very right to be cautious whom you admitted." And no doubt it gave him more pleasure than if he had been received in any other way.'

In January 1787 Mrs. Delany had gone to her town-house, where she was laid up for some weeks with a sharp attack of fever and malignant sore throat. Her wonderful constitution enabled her to rally from her indisposition in spite of the heroic remedies of bleeding and fasting prescribed by the doctors. In May she returned to Windsor, where she now thought of settling for good. Writing

to a friend in August she says, 'My powers are not equal to my will, though upon the whole I find myself tolerably well. . . . The queen has had the goodness to command me to come whenever it is quite easy for me to do it, without sending for me, lest it should embarrass me to refuse: so that most evenings at half-past seven I go to Miss Burney's apartment, and when the royal family return from the terrace, the king, or one of the princesses, generally the Princess Amelia, aged four, comes into the room, takes me by the hand and leads me to the drawing-room, where there is a chair for me by the queen's left hand; the three eldest princesses sit round the table, and the ladies-in-waiting. A vacant chair is left for the king, whenever he pleases to sit down. Every one is employed with pencil, needle, or knitting. Between the pieces of music the conversation is easy and pleasant; and for an hour before the conclusion of the whole the king plays backgammon with one of his equerries, and I am generally dismissed.'

In the course of the summer Mrs. Preston, an old Dublin friend, paid a visit to Mrs. Delany, whom she had not seen for more than twenty years, and she writes the following account of their interview to Mrs. Hamilton: 'I will not delay giving you the pleasure I know you must receive from having such an account of Mrs. Delany as I can truly give you, from having spent two hours with her this morning. I was with her at nine, and heard (with no small agitation) her well-known foot hastening down to meet me. For a few minutes our meeting was silent, as many circumstances rushed into our minds very affecting to us both. I dreaded seeing the alteration in her that was naturally to be expected from twenty years' absence, from the period in her life from sixty-seven to

eighty-seven. But I was soon set at ease by seeing the same apprehension, attention, benevolence, and comfortable enjoyment of every pleasant circumstance in her situation that you remember in her. Her inquiries, her remarks, her whole conversation, full of life and ingenuity; and that kind heart and manner of expressing its feelings, as warm as ever! She is as upright, and walks as alertly, as when you saw her. In short, I could have had no idea of her being as I saw her in every way. . . . Miss Port is a most pleasing girl, with the manners you may suppose Mrs. Delany's *élève* would have. The king and queen and all the younger branches increase in affection and respect to Mrs. Delany. She breakfasted with them yesterday, and the king always makes her lean upon his arm. Her house is cheerful, and *filled* with her own charming works: no pictures have held their colours so well.'

Mrs. Preston also relates a little anecdote of Queen Charlotte's kindness and consideration, another version of which appears in Madame D'Arblay's Diary: 'As soon as the Duchess of Portland died Mrs. Delany got into the chaise to go to her own home. The duke followed her, begging to know what she would accept that had belonged to his mother. Mrs. Delany recollected a bird that the duchess always fed and kept in her own room, and desired to have it, and felt towards it as you may suppose. In a few days Mrs. Delany got a bad fever, and the bird died; but for some hours she was too ill to recollect her bird. The queen had one of the same sort, which she valued extremely (a weaver bird); she took it with her own hands, and while Mrs. Delany slept, she had the cage brought, and put her own bird into it, charging every one not to let it go so near Mrs. Delany that she could per-

ceive the change, till she was enough recovered to bear the loss of her first favourite.'

In November of this year Henry Bunbury, the famous caricaturist, paid a visit to Windsor. After his departure he wrote, or rather drew, an ingenious hieroglyphic letter to Miss Port, of which the following is the interpretation: '*Ass carrying on* a correspondence with a young lady is *a ten dead* with *danger* in these *Times, wood eye* could *Apollo gize toe ewer ant* for *a dress Inn you* without her permission. *Ass* entertaining *ass rid L's a Peer let-ter* own *nought* is *Moor* puzzling than *high rogue leaf x. Teller toe x plain* this *ass fast as possible*.—H. B.'

On January 18th, 1788, Mrs. Delany writes from St. James's Place: 'I came to town the beginning of this week. My illustrious neighbours have also removed to their winter quarters, which makes me less regret leaving Windsor. This is now a melancholy home to me, as recollection brings back the happy hours that made this situation so dear. My niece is now of an age to be indulged with those amusements which are reasonable at her time of life, and indeed she is worthy of all my care. The most extraordinary account I can give of myself is my having made a visit to Mr. and Mrs. Locke at Norbury, about thirty miles from Windsor, in the month of October. Mr. Locke is esteemed one of the most perfect characters living. His lady's outward form and amiable disposition are truly angelic. They have two sons and three daughters. The eldest son is the first genius of the day for drawing. My niece spent four days there very agreeably.'

CHAPTER XIX

(1788)

EARLY in April, after a visit to Kew, Mrs. Delany was taken ill with a feverish chill and oppression of breathing. On April 7th, Miss Port writes to Mrs. Dickenson, 'My aunt has passed a very bad day, the fever and oppression on her breath increasing every moment. Indeed, to so violent a degree that, without waiting for Dr. Turton, Mr. Young bled her. She appears somewhat relieved, but not so much as they expected, upon which Dr. Turton has ordered a blister which, if she is not speedily and greatly relieved, is to be put on . . .

'*April 8th.*

'As I feared, the blister was obliged to be applied. She has been up to have her bed made, and Mr. Young says that, thank God, she is really better; that is, the fever is very much conquered, but she is weaker than can be imagined.'

On April 13th, Bernard Dewes writes to Mrs. Dickenson: 'Miss Port is gone to church. I shall therefore take upon me to answer your kind note, which I have the satisfaction of being able to do as well as time will permit. Mrs. Delany certainly continues gradually mending, and Dr. Turton's expression this morning was, "I have the greatest reason to believe that we shall now have our old friend restored to us." But for that purpose it is absolutely

necessary to keep her as quiet as possible, and this sage advice we most carefully observe, so I hope and trust her most valuable life will still be spared to her family and friends.'

On the same day Horace Walpole wrote to the same lady, 'How very kind, my dear madam, in the midst of your anxiety, *to think of mine!* I am as much obliged to you as if you had *cured* Mrs. Delany. "Certainly recovering," I trust she is, and that you will be rewarded by enjoying her again. But I fear you will dread London, after being received by such alarms about her and your daughter, who, I hope, remains quite well; and that she and you may live to Mrs. D.'s age, and be as much beloved.'

But even Mrs. Delany's vigorous constitution, which might have thrown off the sickness, was not able to hold out against the medical treatment of that period; and on April 15, 1788, she ended her long, happy, and blameless existence, and went down to the grave full of years, full of honours, and mourned by troops of friends. Her waiting-woman, Mrs. Astley, gives the following account of her mistress's last days on earth: 'An inflammation of the lungs was certainly the cause of Mrs. Delany's death, caught in going to meet the Royal family at Kew. After three days' illness, the fever began to intermit, and she was thought better; then it was that the doctors ordered bark to be administered. When I told Mrs. Delany, she looked so distressed, and said, "I have always had a presentiment that if bark were given, it would be my death. You know I have at times a great defluxion on my lungs; it will stop that, and my breath with it." This I mentioned to the doctors, but they said there was no alternative, and it was the only medicine they could

depend on to remove the fever; but seeing the dear lady so averse to taking it, I offered to keep her secret, and put it away. "Oh, no," she said, "I never was reckoned obstinate, and I will not die so." The effect was what she had foretold. Many hours—a great many—did she lie after she had lost the use of speech, labouring for breath.'

From the favourable opinion expressed by her doctors so late as April 13, Mrs. Delany's death caused her friends almost as painful a shock as though she had been in the first vigour of her youth; and upon her great-niece, then in her seventeenth year, the effect was overwhelming. 'Oh, madam,' writes the poor girl to Mrs. Dickenson, 'she is no more! On Tuesday she expired at eleven o'clock at night. Were it not for the assurance I have of her felicity, I think it would not be possible for me to exist.'

In accordance with Mrs. Delany's oft-expressed desire that she should be buried, 'no matter where,' and at as small an expense as decency would permit, she was laid to rest in a vault of her parish church of St. James's. On one of the columns of this church there is a tablet to her memory, bearing an inscription by Dr. Hurd, Bishop of Worcester, to the effect that Mary Delany, *née* Granville, was 'a lady of singular ingenuity and politeness, and of unaffected piety. These qualities endeared her through life to many noble and excellent persons, and made the close of it illustrious by procuring for her many signal marks of grace and favour from their Majesties.'

Two portraits of Mrs. Delany were painted by Opie—one for the King, and the other for Lady Bute. Of the former Horace Walpole said that it was 'pronounced' like a Rembrandt, and told Mrs. Delany that it did not

make her look older than she *was*, but older than she *did*. For Lady Bute's portrait, an elaborately-carved frame was designed by Horace Walpole, the principal ornaments being emblematic of Mrs. Delany's particular accomplishments, such as easel, palette, pencil, and musical instruments. On the palette was the following inscription, also the work of Horace Walpole: 'Mary Granville, niece of Lord Lansdown, correspondent of Swift, widow of Mr. Pendarves and of Dr. Delany, Dean of Down. Her piety and virtues, her excellent understanding, and her talents and taste in music and painting were not only the merits, ornaments, and comfort of an uniform life, but the blessings that crowned and closed the termination of her existence at the uncommon age of eighty-eight.'

Stilted epitaphs, however, render but inadequate testimony to the worth of this 'honourable woman' compared with that which may be read between the lines of her letters and recollections. The fact that she attained so great a celebrity in her own day, and that her name is still revered, must be regarded as one of the rare triumphs of personal character over the more dazzling attributes of genius. She was no professional wit, no publicly toasted beauty; she never published a book, exhibited a picture, nor even made herself the heroine of a scandal. Her artistic productions, though admirable of their kind, were avowedly the work of an amateur, and were only known among her own circle of friends. Why, then, was she famous? For it seems to be still regarded as a slight achievement for a woman to be virtuous, cultivated, and charming, though there may come a time when genius in the art of living may be held deserving of greener and more glorious laurels than genius in the arts of music, painting, or poetry.

MRS. DELANY

In an interesting and sympathetic article on Mrs. Delany in *Blackwood's Magazine* for April 1862, the writer seeks to solve the problem why Mrs. Delany, who never achieved nor even attempted any public success, should shine serenely over the heads of the Carters, Rowes, and Montagus in tender individual celebrity. 'Is it,' he inquires, 'that some natural instinct of humanity points out as the perfection of her sex the appreciative, sympathetic woman, whose business it is to perceive, to comprehend, to quicken the ear and eye of society with that bright and sweet intelligence which, in the most subtle, imperceptible way, leads, forms, and refines public opinion, and brings genius and excellence into fashion?' The reviewer is of opinion that Mrs. Delany's reputation was the spontaneous tribute of one generation's love, admiration, and homage, handed down to posterity with a certain indescribable independence of any actual foundation—differing in some ineffable fashion from the hard-earned renown of heroes and great men, yet warm with a tender personal sentiment beyond the reach of loftier laurels, the quintessence of feminine fame.

'On her and such as her the world bestows spontaneously and of grace such tender myrtle crowns as neither toil nor talent can obtain.'

CHAPTER XX

(SUPPLEMENTAL)

At the conclusion of old-fashioned romances it used to be customary for the author to gather up the loose ends of his story, and give some indication, at least, of the fate that befell the subordinate characters. In the romances of real life it is not always easy to gratify the reader's supposed desire to know what happened to the various personages whose fortunes have been interwoven with those of the hero or heroine. Lady Llanover's edition of the *Autobiography and Correspondence* breaks off with the death of Mrs. Delany; even Miss Port, the 'G. M. A.,' whom we have come to know quite intimately during the first sixteen years of her life, disappears from our sight under the cloud of grief that overwhelmed her for the loss of her kind protector and friend. But doubtless the Editor felt that the family history became from that time too personal and too intimate for her to be able to record it with an impartial pen. Others, however, have in some measure lifted the veil; and with the help of the privately-printed *History of the Granville Family*, by the Rev. Roger Granville; and the *Memoirs of the Baroness de Bunsen*, by Mr. Augustus Hare, it is possible to sketch a brief sequel to the story of Mary Granville.

Of Mrs. Dewes' three sons, Court, Mrs. Delany's favourite

nephew, died unmarried in 1793, when his brother Bernard succeeded him at Wellesbourne. John, the youngest, who, it will be remembered, had taken the name of Granville, lived at Calwich, where his Port nephews and nieces were frequent visitors. Unhappily, Mr. Granville's only son died of consumption at the age of nineteen; and consequently Court, the eldest son of Bernard, succeeded eventually to both Calwich and Wellesbourne, assuming in his turn the name and arms of Granville. Owing to unfortunate speculations, Court the younger was obliged to sell Calwich, a proceeding that would certainly have afflicted his Aunt Delany could she have lived to see it. The present owner of Wellesbourne and representative of this branch of the Granville family is Court's grandson, Major Bevil Granville.

To turn to the Port family. Before Mrs. Delany's death Mr. Port had been compelled to let Ilam, and remove with his large family to a house at Derby. It was probably in consequence of Mr. Port's financial difficulties that Mrs. Delany left her adopted child, Georgina Port, in the charge of her uncle, Court Dewes. But this arrangement did not prove a happy one. Court, although he had always shown himself an affectionate and dutiful nephew, was naturally (according to our chroniclers) of a cold, ungenial nature; moreover, he is said to have disliked young people, and to have treated his niece with coldness, as well as with neglect of her worldly interests. Young as she was at the time of her aunt's death, Miss Port is believed to have already formed an attachment for a gentleman about the Court, probably one of the equerries to the King. According to family tradition, this engagement was broken off through the mischief-making of Fanny Burney, who considered that she had an exclusive claim

upon the attentions of the equerries. Be that as it may, it is certain that Miss Port was far from happy during the years that immediately followed her aunt's death.

Court Dewes, being obliged to live a good deal abroad for the sake of his health, Georgina was taken charge of by Mr. and Mrs. John Granville, who, by all accounts, were a most cheerful and kind-hearted couple. But the young girl, who had not yet recovered from the double grief caused by the loss of her aunt and her lover, fancied that no one cared for her, and that she was not wanted by any member of her family. She imagined that she could never know happiness again, and that it mattered little what became of her. During a season at Bath her remarkable beauty brought her many admirers, among them Mr. Waddington, a gentleman of good family and large fortune. Mr. Waddington's suit being encouraged by her uncle and aunt, Miss Port allowed herself to be guided by their wishes, and accepted his offer, although she was but just eighteen, while he was more than twenty years her senior.

The marriage took place in 1789, and for the first two years the couple lived at Dunston Park in Berkshire, where Frances, afterward the Baroness de Bunsen, was born in 1791. Shortly after her birth, Mr. Waddington bought the picturesque White House at Llanover, in the lovely valley of the Usk, formerly the property of a branch of the Cecil family. Here, in almost complete seclusion, the young wife was content to remain for the next eleven years, occupying herself with her books, her drawing, and the education of her little daughters. From the childish recollections of the Baroness Bunsen some idea may be formed of the occupations and amusements of those quiet years. The children were brought up in habits of hardy independence, and were never overburdened with lessons,

though what was learned had to be learned thoroughly. They led a healthy out-of-door existence—riding the horses barebacked, paddling in the little brook that rushes through the grounds, and climbing the hills that surround their home. Occasionally we get a glimpse of the Dewes and Port relations. Frances goes to stay with her grandfather, Mr. Port, at Derby, where she is dazzled by the beauty of her Aunt Louisa, and charmed by the gentle unselfishness of her Aunt Harriet, who, as the only plain member of a handsome family, was not as highly appreciated as she deserved. There were visits, too, to Wellesbourne and Calwich, and after 1805 a yearly expedition to London, when the Queen and the princesses used to talk over old times with Mrs. Waddington, and admire her pretty children. Dr. Burney occasionally dined with the Waddingtons in town; and it appears that Madame D'Arblay's pension had been restored to her after her marriage, on the representation of Mrs. Waddington, who had made known her reduced circumstances to Queen Charlotte. If the story of Fanny Burney's mischief-making rests on good foundations, this was certainly a case of heaping coals of fire on an enemy's head.

In the winter of 1816-17 Mr. and Mrs. Waddington, with their three surviving daughters, Frances, Emily, and Augusta, went to Rome, a journey which was to mark the beginning of a new epoch in the lives of two at least of the party. Bunsen, then a young unknown student, was admitted to intimacy with the Waddington family, and allowed to read German with Frances. A love affair was the not unnatural consequence, but the declaration of this attachment was received with some consternation by the young lady's parents. In being poor, obscure, and a foreigner, Bunsen had committed three

crimes against the usual English standard of eligibility. However, Niebuhr, who was consulted in the matter, expressed his earnest conviction that the talents and character of Bunsen constituted a capital far more remunerative than any money investment. Mrs. Waddington, remembering possibly that by the feminine traditions of her own family character had almost invariably been placed above rank or fortune, allowed herself to be guided by Niebuhr's advice, and the marriage took place in July 1817. Little more than twenty years later, that ineligible son-in-law came to London as Prussian Minister at the Court of St. James.

Within two or three days of her sister's wedding, Emily, whose health had always been delicate, was married to Colonel Manby, a union that was cut short by death only two years later. Mr. and Mrs. Waddington, accompanied only by their youngest daughter, returned to their quiet home at Llanover. Augusta, a brilliant, high-spirited girl of fifteen, had already given proofs of a strong individuality and considerable natural gifts. The studies that failed to appeal to her she absolutely rebelled against; but when her interest was once roused, her energy and perseverance were inexhaustible. Her drawings had won praise from Thorwaldsen, she was already a fine linguist, and now the history, literature, and music of her Welsh fatherland were to become the chief objects of her enthusiasm. But her sympathies were wide. The eighteenth century and its traditions also possessed a strong fascination for her; and it is certain that she proved an eager and attentive listener to her mother's stories of 'Aunt Delany,' her life and times. No doubt the old family letters were read and re-read during the long winter evenings at Llanover, the fairy-like embroideries examined and copied, and the

leaves of the famous Flora turned over with reverent hands.

In 1823 Augusta Waddington, then twenty-one, was married to Mr., afterwards Sir Benjamin, Hall of Abercarne, who was created Lord Llanover in 1859. After his marriage Mr. Hall bought a portion of the old Llanover estate, and built upon it the large mansion, now known as the Lower House. Mr. Waddington died in 1828; and the following year Mrs. Waddington, accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. Hall, paid another visit to Rome, and saw her eldest daughter again, after a separation that had lasted eleven years. The Bunsens' large family and straitened means kept them for the most part stationary; but in 1838 they came with their children to Llanover, when the church-bells were rung and the avenues decorated to do them honour. In 1841 Bunsen was appointed to represent his country at the Court of St. James.

Down to the end of her long life Mrs. Waddington, we are told, retained her warm sympathies and her wonderful intellect. The last years of her existence passed peacefully in her country home, among her peasant neighbours, and it is pleasant to know that her enjoyment of simple natural pleasures—her birds, her flowers, and her books—remained as fresh as in the days of her girlhood. At a dinner given to the villagers during the last Christmas season of her life, one of the old men, instead of drinking her health, said, 'I drink, Madam, to your happy passage to the realms of bliss; we can neither of us be very long in this world.'—'*That* is the very best toast I ever heard in my life,' was her reply. Barely six months later, on June 15, 1850, when she had been occupied as usual in arranging her flowers and reading her letters, Mrs. Waddington received what she felt to be her death-stroke. With the

fine fortitude that was one of the traditions of her eighteenth-century training, she walked unassisted to her room, lay down upon her bed, and never spoke again, thus mercifully escaping long lingering months of feebleness and uselessness that would have been intolerable to one of her strong mind and active habits. She had left directions that she was to be buried in the earth, 'like the poor'; and when her coffin was borne to the little churchyard across the park, the ancient Welsh dirge called 'Gorphenwyd' was chanted by the people among whom she had passed her life.

It was fortunate that the White House—now known as the Upper House (or Ty Uchaf)—and its treasures, many of which had belonged to Mrs. Delany, passed into the reverent keeping of Lady Llanover. The old house, though rarely inhabited, was kept up in its accustomed state, and the decorations, when renewed, were chosen to harmonise with the eighteenth-century furniture. It seems probable that Lady Llanover had long in contemplation the publication of Mrs. Delany's Correspondence, and had collected materials from other members of the family; but it is not until the late 'fifties' that we find her regularly at work upon the book, selecting, arranging, and annotating the vast mass of material. In 1857 she spent three months in London, going daily to the British Museum, accompanied by her assistants, for purposes of research and verification. In 1861 the first series appeared in three substantial volumes, ornamented with numerous engravings from family portraits, and enriched by voluminous notes. This was followed, in 1862, by the second series, also consisting of three volumes, with an index covering nearly a hundred pages.

A brief account of the reception that was accorded to this remarkable book forty years ago may not be without

interest to the modern reader. The sale is said to have been larger than was expected, considering the high price of the work, and its value was soon recognised by the genuine lover of chronicles of old days and by the earnest student of eighteenth-century history, a public fit though few; few, that is, in comparison with the novel-reading multitudes. Curiously enough, the book was ignored by both the *Edinburgh* and the *Quarterly Reviews*, though the *Diaries of a Lady of Quality* and Mrs. Trench's *Letters* were noticed in the pages of one or both about the same time. Two long and exhaustive reviews appeared in the *Athenæum* (among other journals), and one, to which allusion has already been made, in *Blackwood's Magazine*. The former were sufficiently appreciative, though written in the rather patronising and flippant style affected by the reviewers of the early 'sixties.' The first *Athenæum* notice, which appeared on January 5, 1861, begins with the quoted declaration of 'a certain sagacious man of the world,' to the effect that if he were permitted to hold converse with a departed spirit he would summon up that of Guy Faux. The reviewer, on the other hand, held that a long passed-away lady, willing to return and tell her little secrets, would be something more delicious still, and remarked that one of the ladies whose spirits he had most desired to see was Mrs. Delany.

'No matter whether she came as the well-memoried chatty widow, or as her earlier and blooming self, the tender, irresistible Mary Granville, or as the sad child-wife, the staid young Mrs. Pendarves. In either character she would have received the warmest welcome, and here [in the Correspondence] we have the dear delicious creature in all three.' After pointing out that Lord Brougham or Lord Lyndhurst in early boyhood might have seen her

whose first husband was born in the reign of Charles II., who herself sat in the lap of Bolingbroke at Powell's Puppet Show, who played with Kitty of Queensberry, who was petted by the ex-maids of honour of Queen Mary, admired by Swift, complimented on her dress by Queen Caroline, and loved as a friend by Queen Charlotte—he concludes: 'Is not *this* a woman to listen to? Is not this woman one at whose story we are warranted in drawing the curtains, wheeling round the sofa, brightening the fire?'

The *Blackwood* reviewer brackets Mrs. Delany with Mrs. Thrale, a conjunction that in her lifetime the former lady had always been careful to avoid. However, his comments are for the most part discriminating, more especially when he deals with the curious side-lights that gleam from every page of the book upon questions in which women have the strongest interest. Love, as he remarks with perfect justice, has scarcely any recognised place in these records. 'Those fair, virtuous, cultivated women have little to say to the doubtful divinity. When they are suitably married, it is with a mild equanimity and friendship that they regard the partner of their life. He is *mon ami* to his calm consort. . . . Kindness, affection, equality of sentiments, and mutual good opinion reigned between the placid pairs, while the wife found in a circle of enthusiastic female friends that passionate and tender love which had nothing to do with commonplace, matrimonial bonds.'

Beyond a doubt Mrs. Delany might have said, like John Donne, that friendship was her second religion. In the course of her long life, her numerous friendships, tender, loyal, and all-enduring, were handed down, like precious heirlooms, from one generation to another.

It is only natural, perhaps, that the reviewer should allude somewhat slightingly to Mrs. Delany's works as 'pretty efforts of female ingenuity.' Her Flora, her pastels, and her embroideries had been only seen during the past seventy years by members of the family at Llanover and their friends. But an inspection of the two volumes of the Flora—now in the Print Room at the British Museum—will be sufficient to prove that its merit was not overrated by the artists and naturalists of her own day. At the time of the Diamond Jubilee the Hon. Mrs. Herbert of Llanover was anxious to have some of the specimens copied to present to the Queen. The only person found capable of successfully copying these 'efforts of female ingenuity,' executed in advanced old age, was a Japanese artist, who happened to be in London. A glance at the finest of the pastels preserved at Llanover is sufficient to convince the beholder that if Mary Granville had enjoyed the advantage of a professional training, we might have had an English woman pastellist who would have rivalled Rosalba on her own ground. The embroideries, again, are really needle-paintings in the truest sense of the word, and when framed and glazed have all the effect of old illuminations. Mrs. Delany certainly carried out her theory that the ornamental work of gentlewomen ought to be superior to bought work in design and execution, and that their plain work should be the model for their maids.

As might perhaps have been expected, the reviewers allude with something like dismay to the 'six vast volumes' in which the book appeared, and attribute its bulk to the veneration with which the Editor regarded her distinguished relation, whose lightest word she thought worthy of preservation. In 1861 the theory of 'recon-

struction,' as applied to historical work, was comparatively new, and had not to any great extent been put into practice. Hence, the documentary value of even the most trifling details of domestic life in bygone days was not yet fully understood. History, to the great majority still meant little more than a report (whose accuracy was often affected by party spirit or prejudice) of battles, diplomatic treaties, and political intrigues, while its *dramatis personæ* consisted of princes, statesmen, and military leaders. The 'atmosphere' of a period, the daily life of a people—these were petty matters, beneath the notice of an historian of the classic school. Macaulay, it is true, in the final volumes of his history, published in 1855, had made a successful attempt to reconstitute for his readers the actual life of the closing years of the seventeenth century; but in the eyes of many of his contemporaries the fact that his book was as interesting as any novel, was merely an additional proof of the inaccuracy of his facts and the unsoundness of his opinions.

In France, Taine and the De Goncourts, in their historical essays, were doing brilliant work on the lines of reconstruction. The latter, more especially in their vivid pictures of society in France under the Republic and the First Empire, had forsaken the dry-as-dust records beloved of their colleagues, and had relied for their material upon 'living documents' in the shape of newspapers, letters, diaries, squibs, almanacs, and other contemporary ephemerides. They had indeed gone so far as to assert that 'un temps dont on n'a pas un échantillon de robe et un menu de diner, l'histoire ne le voit pas vivre.' It is easy to imagine the avidity with which the brothers would have fallen upon the correspondence of Mrs. Delany had she been their compatriot, more especially when

we remember their theory that the old lady's tub-chair (*tonneau*) was the social pillar of the eighteenth century; and their testimony to the historical value of these 'living memories' in mob cap and spectacles, who held the traditions of the past in their wrinkled hands, and exercised so gentle yet potent an influence on those who came after them.

The *Blackwood* reviewer observes that the Delany Correspondence is essentially 'a female book,' an 'ill phrase,' but it will pass. We know he meant that the book presented the woman's point of view; that it was, in short, a feminine commentary upon the people and events of the period, written frankly, freely, carelessly, and intended only for the eyes of relations or intimate friends. But the fact that it is so completely a 'female book' will hardly lessen its value in the eyes of reflecting persons. Since the first dawn of civilisation we have been made familiar with the man's point of view; but, with few exceptions, the woman's thoughts, feelings, opinions, have been buried with her, and the half of human history is left a blank. What would we not give nowadays for the Travels of a Lady Mandeville, the Familiar Letters of a Mrs. Howell, the Diary of a Mrs. Evelyn, or a Mrs. Pepys?

By the critics and public of 1861 a biographical work appears to have been judged upon its merits as a 'story' rather than as a document for the elucidation of history. There was a decided impatience of gossiping records and of the repetition of trivial incidents which had no direct bearing upon the life-drama of hero or heroine. It was not yet generally realised that the chronicles of small beer improve, like many other things, with keeping, and that even 'female gossip' which

is upwards of a century old acquires the same kind of pathetic interest as a woman's work-bag or a child's plaything that has come down to us out of a remote past. We could better spare better things than, for instance, the gossip of a Dame Margaret Paston, or of certain ladies of the Verney family. Splendidly as the eighteenth century has been illustrated for us by the literary and political correspondence of a Pope or a Swift, a Burke or a Bolingbroke, by the vivid character-portraits of a Hervey, and the witty chronicles of a Walpole or Wortley Montagu, the picture would still be incomplete without those details of the *vie intime* of the period which are painted with Dutch fidelity by Mrs. Delany. From her we know exactly how life appeared to a well-bred, well-educated woman in the reigns of the first three Georges. Nothing is hid from us. We are the confidantes of her love-affairs, we assist at her toilettes, we accompany her to weddings and christenings, to operas and masquerades, we look over her shoulder when she reads or works, we help her to carry out her shopping commissions for country correspondents, we are privy to her little acts of charity, we share her tender anxiety for sick or absent friends. It is these familiar trifles of everyday life that put marrow into the dry bones of history, and blood into its flaccid veins.

The great work off her hands, Lady Llanover still found plenty to occupy her energies. The cause of Welsh literature, Welsh education, and Welsh music appealed as strongly as ever to her sympathies. Her library contains a fine collection of the national chronicles and national airs of the Principality, while she was the originator of the Welsh Collegiate Institution at Llandovery. For thirty years it was her custom on St. David's

Day to send an offering of ornamental leeks to the Prince and Princess of Wales. These leeks, which were intended to be worn as badges, consisted of a mother-o'-pearl bulb, strings of seed pearls, and green ribbon. Like Mrs. Delany, Lady Llanover was not afraid of undertaking a new art late in life, for she began to study oil-painting when she was more than sixty years of age. As a draughts-woman and embroideress she had always excelled, besides inheriting the family talent for cutting out portraits in paper.

After Lord Llanover's death in 1867, his widow reigned in solitary state for close upon thirty years, her only surviving child, the Honourable Augusta Hall, being already married to Mr. Herbert of Llanarth. Lady Llanover's mode of life was governed in great measure by the traditions of the eighteenth century, and her tastes were modelled upon those of Mrs. Delany. She inherited, no doubt, the family tendency to length of life, yet the fact that she lived to enter her ninety-fourth year was probably partly due to her abstemious habits. She believed, possibly with justice, that most people ate and drank too much, and she regarded the younger generation as a somewhat degenerate race. A rigid abstainer herself, she proved the sincerity of her convictions by closing every public-house on her estate, thereby cutting off a substantial source of income. Five o'clock tea and late dinner she entirely disdained, taking her own dinner at two o'clock, and tea at eight. This *régime*, combined with plenty of fresh air and exercise, proved eminently successful in her own case, for she scarcely knew a day's illness down to the time of her death, from the natural weakness of old age, in January 1896.

In an obituary notice that appeared in the *Athenæum*

the writer observes that Lady Llanover's 'remarkable energy, her untiring powers of work, and her tenacity of purpose, ensured the success of most of the projects which, during a long life, she undertook with an enthusiasm rarely equalled; and when asked how it was that she almost invariably attained the ends for which she strove, "By remembering my mother's advice," was her reply, "never to lose sight of your object, or any opportunity of furthering it. . . ." Lady Llanover possessed remarkable quickness of perception and insight into business, and a genuine gift for narration, so that it is to be regretted that she has left no personal record of the varied experiences of her life. She retained to the last the charm of manner and appearance that had belonged to her earlier life. Failing sight and bodily feebleness alone showed her advanced years.'

With the death of Lady Llanover a link was snapped that had almost joined the eighteenth with the twentieth century, but it is pleasant to know that the family traditions and the family treasures are still in safe keeping. The Upper House stands where it did, surrounded by its bodyguard of veteran trees, and to enter it is to discover what seems to be an enchanted dwelling wherein the clock has stood still for more than a hundred years. There is a dignified, almost an austere, simplicity of furniture and decoration which is rest and refreshment to the eye wearied with the fripperies and draperies of the modern drawing-room. Here we see Mrs. Delany's little spinnet on which Mr. Handel played, and there her portrait of the Duchess of Queensberry, and the beautiful pastel of Sigismunda with the heart of Guiscard that Sir Joshua Reynolds mistook for an oil-painting. Mrs. Delany would assuredly have felt herself at home in the 'parlour' that was Mrs. Wad-

dington's favourite sitting-room. On the walls are a couple of specimens of her famous cut paper flowers, and a few family portraits. The shelves are filled with books, most of which she might have read, old novels in numerous volumes, bound in grey-blue boards with white backs; a long array of the *Critical* and *Monthly Reviews*, to the mercy of whose contributors Fanny Burney appealed in the preface to *Evelina*; letters, memoirs, and journals of last-century celebrities, all in early editions. Even the wall-paper is of Mrs. Delany's favourite colour, a deep, yet brilliant, shade of blue. At the solid, serviceable table we can imagine her occupied with one of her ingenious works, while 'G.M.A.' practised her minuet steps on the polished boards, and the 'amiable Duchess,' in her many wrappings, sat beside a huge fire. It is to be hoped that this unique interior, which is so admirable a memorial both of Mrs. Delany and of that fast-receding period which we must soon learn to regard as 'the century before last,' may long be preserved in all its picturesque completeness.

CHAPTER XXI

AMONG the manuscripts relating to Mrs. Delany are several unpublished letters written to or from friends of hers, and also one or two papers containing contemporary accounts of curious matrimonial arrangements. Three letters of Miss Seward's, the Lichfield 'poetess,' the first to Mrs. Port, and the others to Court Dewes, are characteristic specimens of her flamboyant style. The first of these is dated May 11, 1787, Miss Seward being then just forty years old, and at the zenith of her poetical fame. The following is an extract from this remarkable production, which reads less like a serious effort than a parody upon what Miss Seward herself would have called the 'epistolary effusions' of the time :—

'MY DEAR MADAM,—I had great pleasure in reading your letter. Amiable are those effusions of maternal tenderness which flowed from your pen. What a pity it is that Disease should ever cloud the energies of such a brain! I have myself of late been very unwell—pain and weariness in my limbs; and after reading or writing for half-an-hour an unconquerable torpor seems to cloud my brain. Beneath the retarding power of this indisposition my epistolary debts accumulate to a terrifying magnitude. When last we had the pleasure of seeing Mr. Port I thought of going instantly to Buxton, but as I go to Ludlow

in June I cannot think of so long an absence from my father. And thus, which is a very strong inducement to neglect for once the call of Hygeia, I shall be at home to receive you upon the 22nd, on your road to Ilam. Ah! *now*, if Miss Port should be with you, the pleasure of seeing her would recompense my disappointment that Mr. Dewes cannot accompany you. I long to see and converse with the dear girl whose fine sense and ingenuous manners the imperial smile has not had power to dazzle or seduce; and who preserves the village simplicity while she acquires the polish of courts. The desire I have long felt that my Calwich friends and Mr. Dewes might hear our choral minstrels in the Church Service is thrown out of present probability. They are pulling down the carved work with axes and hammers, and the voice of harmony is silent amidst their dissonance. . . .'

With Mr. Court Dewes Miss Seward evidently carried on a sort of literary flirtation, consulting him about her work, and exchanging criticisms on poets old and new. In an undated letter addressed to Mr. Dewes she writes:—

'If leisure should always come to me in such limited portions as it has lately done, and if such a disproportional number of employments should be pressed upon those intervals by Prudence, and by my friendships (all which appear to me extremely probable), the projected miscellany can *never* appear. Transcribing the two epistles from my correspondence with *her* to whom the letters I read at Calwich were addressed, is all the progress in that intended publication which I have been able to make since we parted; tho' I have scribbled at every possible recess from business, company and exercise, but it has

been in wading thro' the depths of my epistolary obligations to *living* friends. On my return home eleven letters were, with unbroken seals, put into my hands; and seven of them were very long, nor have I received less than four or five a week ever since. Mr. Hardinge sends me perpetual paquets, containing many sheets, each full of wit, humour, and genius, both *in* and *out* of measure, combined with the most provokingly stimulative opinions of the want of genius in our *modern poets*, with whose works I can perceive he is almost wholly unacquainted, tho' he has possessed himself with a conviction of their incompetence. Thus discovering himself a Child of Prejudice, he robs the flattering encomiums he lavishes upon *my* writings of all their sweetness. It is impossible I can be gratified with praise which is denied to authors to whose works *mine* bear the same comparison that the figure of an opera-dancer in plaister-of-Paris upon a mantelpiece bears to the Apollo Belvidere in purest marble.

'From want of time it is utterly out of my power to answer these letters with a fifth part of the speed and profusion with which I receive them; yet the returns, poor as they are, that politeness and gratitude on my own account, and indignation on that of others, extort from my pen, make still further and very large inroads upon the claims of the muses, who could before so seldom find my writing-desk unoccupied by preparations for the post-office.

'I have also been unable to decline making another addition to the number of my correspondents—a Doctor of Divinity of middle age, who has Learning, Wit, and a very glowing Enthusiasm. His name is Warner. He is the masterspring, and was the original mover of the scheme

for raising a statue to Howard. About a month since he passed four days in Lichfield, honouring me with much of his time and attention, and offering me every literary service in his power, with the most affectionate and engaging frankness.

'Our town talks loudly, I wish it may be falsely, of Mr. Broke Boothby's[1] ruin—affirms that continual arrests are driving him into France, in probably perpetual exile from his country—an exile embittered, O how dreadfully should I think it embittered! by the consciousness that a number of people in my native land were execrating an unprincipled extravagance, by which they stood deprived of the just dues of their labours. A young gentleman of Lichfield, on a late visit to this infatuated man, saw him receive his perfumery account for the year, which amounted to two hundred pounds.'

Another immense letter to Mr. Dewes, containing three original sonnets and an essay on the sonnet-form, is printed in Miss Seward's *Correspondence*. The following extract is quaint enough in its Miltonic criticism to be repeated here:—'It does not appear to me that studied exactness or high and brilliant polish are necessary to this order of composition [*i.e.* the sonnet], or are at all characteristic of the grave, impressive, energetic sonnet of which, in *our* language, Milton is the Father. To those last refinements, or indeed to anything like refinement, not one of Milton's lays claim. They often use the plainness of conversational phrase with very fine effect, and without pretension to neatness and high polish, they give us *better* things. Vigor, compression, and dignity, which results from the power of the thought and imagery, rather than from the exquisite sweetness of the number, are

[1] A writer of verses, and one of the Lichfield literary set.

their characteristics; yet where the *subject* is *gay* or tender a sonnet *may* be sometimes improved by studious finish.'

The letters of Mrs. Delany's friend, Mrs. Elizabeth Carter, the translator of Epictetus, are in pleasant contrast to those of Miss Seward's. Two or three of these are among the unpublished Delany MSS., though they are addressed to no member of the family, but possibly to common friends or acquaintances. Mrs. Carter was born in 1717 and died in 1806. Besides her translations, she published a volume of original poems, and contributed a couple of papers to the *Rambler*. She seems to have been one of the most worthy and dignified members of the blue-stocking set that was presided over by Mrs. Montagu. A specimen or two of her style will suffice to prove that even the most learned lady of the eighteenth century could write simply and naturally when she chose. In a letter dated Deal Lane, June 4, 1750, and addressed to Miss Highmore,[1] she observes:—

'And so you think that we queer uniform people who live in the country have not an excuse in the world to help ourselves if we happen to follow the example of our correspondents in town, and not answer a letter as soon as might be expected. But however strange you imagine it to be that folks at threescore miles' distance from London should have any one earthly thing to interrupt their leisure, we have often as much business upon our hands as ever was contained upon a message card. For my own part I have lately so racketed up and down the face of the earth that I have as good a title to the epithet of gossiping as you can boast of, and therefore claim all the privileges to excuse my not thanking you sooner for your

[1] Samuel Richardson's friend and correspondent.

very obliging letter. I congratulate you that there is so soon to appear another volume of your favourite Mrs. Leapor's[1] poetry. It is with much concern that I find myself unable to comply with a request from you and Mr. Browne, but indeed you pay me too great a compliment in supposing me capable of writing upon any subject that is proposed to me. Tho' I highly respect Mrs. Leapor's character from the account you give of it, yet as she was absolutely unknown to myself, and I am but little acquainted even with her writings, I am upon this account as well as many others, entirely unfit for such an undertaking as you propose.

'No doubt you have seen the *Ramblers*, and I hope you are pleased with them. Something of this kind seems greatly wanted, and I heartily wish these papers may meet with the encouragement they deserve. . .

'I have begun my morning rambles, and that I may not oversleep myself, have furnished my room with a Larum, which serves besides as a mighty good exercise of Philosophy for cure to such sleepy-headed mortals as I am. One of the most notable trials of human patience is the impertinence of a Larum. However, its troublesome admonitions are well compensated when one is revelling in hedges, woodbines, and honeysuckles, and all that variety of delight which the fair creation bestows on a morning walk.'

Mrs. Carter, as has been seen, outlived Mrs. Delany by about twenty years, and the other letters of hers preserved in the Llanover collection are dated 1801, and therefore written when she was over seventy years of age. In the first of these, addressed to Mrs.

[1] Mary Leapor, daughter of a gardener. She published a couple of volumes of poetry, and died in 1744, in the twenty-fourth year of her age.

Duncombe, Miss Highmore's married name, she says: 'You must have seen in the papers what clouds have involved the political horizon. The illness of our beloved sovereign, with which he was attacked before the new arrangement had taken effect, threatened sad confusion. The delirium was of no consequence, as it was a common effect of the Fevers of this winter; but this Fever in the King was once so strong as to give apprehensions for his life. That Terror is, in a good degree, removed, so that there is reason to hope he may soon be enabled to resume the cares of Royalty, and settle the floating state of the nation. On Wednesday there was a very affecting scene at the Ancient Music by an additional stanza being added to "God Save the King," containing a prayer for his health. Mr. Sheridan has done himself honour by opposing a very absurd and unfeeling motion for bringing on a very important business when the King was in so an alarming a situation. Mr. Pitt, who came in while Mr. Sheridan was speaking, was more affected than he was ever known to be. . . .'

'*May* 24, 1801.—We have again subject for great thankfulness for our successes, and again for regret in the loss of so many of our gallant countrymen, and their brave commanders at their head. Victory is indeed a very awful blessing, and I heartily join in your supplication for peace. . . . I have not seen many new publications, and some that I have seen I have forgot. I remember in general that I liked *Percival.* The newest that I have heard of or seen are *Tableaux de Famille.* This is a translation from German by the translator of *Caroline de Lichtfield.* It is a work of genius. The characters are well drawn, and with great humour. The moral and religious principles are often very good, but like other German productions,

some parts I think exceptionable. *The Father and Daughter*, by Mrs. Opie, is, I think, original in the story, and the principles unexceptionable. A little volume of Poems by Mr. William Boscawen, the translator of Horace, I have not yet read. I beg your acceptance of the last two volumes, and will bring them with me.'

It does not appear from the letters that Mrs. Delany was brought much into contact with Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, but it is evident that there were few of her feminine contemporaries whom she regarded with a more genuine respect and affection than Lady Mary's daughter, Lady Bute. This friendship was continued, as Mrs. Delany's friendships were so apt to be, by the succeeding generation on each side. Lady Bute's brilliantly clever daughter, Lady Louisa Stuart, who was born in 1757, and died in 1851, kept up the family friendship with Miss Port, after the latter became Mrs. Waddington. Among the papers at Llanover are two interesting letters from Lady Louisa, who, as her recently published recollections prove, had inherited much of the wit and vivacity of her celebrated grandmother. The first of these letters, which is undated, was evidently written in answer to one from Mrs. Waddington, inquiring into some point of precedence, and runs as follows:—

'Although the grandsons of peers have no legal rank, I believe it is now very commonly given them in society, and therefore according to its present customs you were right in putting Lord Rupert above Lord Hood. It is odd enough that the present Duke of Bedford and his brothers, sons of Lord Tavistock, were Master Russells as long as their old grandfather lived: he would not let them be called Lords; but it was held one of his whims. However, the late Duke of Rutland's brother (in the

same predicament) was called Mr. Manners till presented at Court, when the king [George III.] corrected the Lord of the Bed-chamber with "No, no, Lord Robert Manners." The Duke of Buccleugh of my time, whose father also died before his grandfather, had a brother, *Mr.* Scott. If I durst say so, the love of mere title has most marvellously increased in these last twenty or thirty years, and, I own, appears to me a great increase of *vulgarity*. Between ourselves, my father's blood would have boiled at the thoughts of one of his descendants suing to be made a paper Lord—paper Ladies there were, and *that* was thought belonging to female weakness and vanity. The late Lord Derby's sisters remained Miss Stanleys; Lord Mansfield refused titles for his nieces as below Lord Stormont's daughters to accept — tho' afterwards they became Ladies at their own request. As for *men*, the thing never was heard of till within these twenty-five years, and the first instance of it happened in the case of no very creditable person. Certainly our old-fashioned pride was in birth and name, and we were too proud to think that heightened by title. However, all pride is perhaps equally foolish.'

Another letter of Lady Louisa's, whose date can be approximately guessed, is headed 'Article Seven of No. 136, page 450,' and is evidently intended to draw Mrs. Waddington's attention to an article in the *Edinburgh Review* for July 1838, on 'The Character of Chatham.' In order to make the letter clear, we must first refer to a passage in the article in which the reviewer states that in 1777 Pitt made a brilliant speech on the American War, and replying to Lord Suffolk, who had said, in reference to employing the Indians against our enemies, that 'we were justified in using all the means that God

and nature had put into our hands,' exclaimed indignantly, 'I am astonished—shocked—to hear such principles confessed, to hear them avowed in this House or in this country—principles equally unconstitutional, unhuman, and unchristian. My Lords, I did not intend to have trespassed again on your attention, but I cannot repress my indignation. I feel myself impelled by every duty. We are called upon by members of this House, as men, as Christian men, to protest against such notions, standing near the throne, polluting the ear of Majesty. *That God and nature put into our hands!* I know not what idea that Lord may entertain of God and nature, but I know that such abominable principles are equally abhorrent to religion and humanity. What! Attribute the sacred sanction of God and nature to the massacres of the Indian scalping-knife, to the cannibal savage, torturing, murdering, roasting, eating the mangled victims of his barbarous battles. Such horrible notions shock every sentiment of honour; they shock me as a lover of honourable war, and a detester of murderous barbarity.' Pitt further went on to protest that 'From the tapestry that adorns these walls, the ancestor of this noble Lord frowns with indignation at the *disgrace of his country*'; and concluded, 'I could not have slept this night in my bed, or have reposed my head on my pillow, without giving thus vent to my eternal abhorrence of such preposterous and enormous principles.'

Lady Louisa, referring to the reviewer's admiration for the passage quoted, observes, 'This is undoubtedly the highest strain of eloquence, a speech that must have convulsed every hearer; but there was a circumstance in the debate that produced it that the reviewer probably does not know, nor the editor either. Some of those who

opposed Lord Chatham hinted that the practice he so forcibly condemned had a precedent, and had begun under his own administration, the Indians having been employed by us in that very war, his pride and boast, that terminated in the conquest of Canada. The French, indeed, were not like the Americans, in some sort our countrymen, and they perhaps commenced this savage warfare, making it on our side only retaliation. Still, the cruelty of it was the same. Lord Chatham gave the charge a flat denial, but in the House of Lords he did not exercise the despotic empire he had once professed over the House of Commons. Some ventured to maintain their assertion, and appealed for proof to that person who must know most of the matter. This was Sir Jeffrey—lately created Lord Amherst—the general who commanded our troops during the Canadian war. He remained silent till an almost general cry forced him to rise; then unused to speaking, and much attached to Lord Chatham, he said reluctantly as little on the subject as he could. But that little sufficed to show that our Indian allies *were* employed, and that no reprehension from home had followed.

'Of course I can only speak from hearsay and recollection of the newspapers of what passed in the House of Lords sixty-one years ago. It made much noise, however, and was next day the whole subject of discussion everywhere. "And did Pitt really deny it?" said my father, lifting his hands and eyes. "Is it possible? Why, I have by me at this hour letters of his singing *Io Pæans* upon the successful employment of the Indians in that war." The remarkable expression fixed itself in my memory. I would not quote any *opinion* of my father's about Lord Chatham, no more than I would trust Lord

Chatham's about him. They had been friends, and became enemies. Which was in the wrong I cannot judge, but reason tells me that they could scarcely estimate each other candidly. Here, however, was no *opinion* given. My father stated a fact, thinking as it were aloud, and addressing it solely to my mother, who joined him in wondering at Lord Chatham, but seemed not at all surprised at the point itself, which, I presume, was notorious; since fewer years had elapsed than may now have blotted out the Peninsular contest from people's remembrance. I will add one trifling anecdote. We went that night to a party, where we chanced to meet the late Lord Edgecombe, an habitual joker, and rather a coarse one. "Well," cried he, "had not we a pretty scene in the House yesterday, and a fine opportunity of seeing how a great man looks when he is fairly caught in a lie? I assure you, he stood it with most magnanimous indifference, not the least discomposed."'[1]

It was the custom with Mary Granville and her contemporaries to write down curious stories of real life, or accounts of remarkable people which they might happen to hear. Some of those are printed in the *Autobiography and Correspondence*, but among Mrs. Delany's papers are two, which, to the best of my belief, have never been published. Both deal with marriage arrangements of an unusual kind, the one in high life, the other in low life. The first is entitled 'Account of Phipps' Marriage,' and relates the circumstances that led to the marriage of Mr. Phipps, afterwards Lord Mulgrave, the grandson of

[1] This letter is particularly interesting at the present time (January, 1900) when scarcely a day passes without our hearing that the natives are with difficulty prevented from throwing themselves into the struggle now raging in South Africa.

the Duchess of Buckingham, with a daughter of Lord Hervey.

'The Duchess of Buckingham [*née* Darnley, the illegitimate daughter of James II. by Catherine Sedley], by the premature death of her son, the young duke, became possessed of all his fortune. Her daughter by the Earl of Anglesea (her first husband) married Sir Constantine Phipps, a lawyer, and Chancellor of Ireland. The son of this marriage the Duchess resolved to make her heir, and being aware that he was not likely to have had very polished training, consulted Lord Hervey how he might be brought forward in the world with advantage. Lord Hervey said, "Marry him into some well-established family." "Well," said the Duchess, "but to whom or how?" "Why, you shall have my daughter." Agreed. Lord Hervey then told the young lady he could give her very little fortune, and she must consider whether she would take this probably unlicked Irish cub or stand the chances of a worse match or none. She assented, and Mr. Phipps was sent for to town. He came on Thursday night to Buckingham House, was carried into the apartment appropriated for him, where supper was served with great magnificence. The next morning they told him the mercer, tailor, etc., waited for his commands, and soon after came my Lord Hervey to wait on him, who told him that he came to make him an offer of his daughter, that the Duchess of Buckingham had chosen to be his wife. His answer was he really had no acquaintance with the young lady, and could not tell what to say to it. But that was nothing —married he was to be, and the young lady was brought in the evening. She is very handsome, and a fine figure. Mr. Phipps, they say, was struck with astonishment at her beauty. The Duchess of Buckingham received her

lying on a white satin couch, under a white satin canopy. This was on Friday; on Saturday they were married. The Duchess is dying, if not dead. She sent for the Herald at Arms, and desired she might be buried like King James's daughter, and laid near the Queen. There is no repeating the extravagance of her pride. I wish the young people may be happy, but never was made so strange a match in so strange a fashion, and I fear their circumstances will be nothing extraordinary. She says she has settled four thousand a year on them, but I doubt it will prove like Don Diego's will in the *Spanish Curate*.'

In *Burke* we merely read the prosaic announcement that Constantine Phipps married Lepell, eldest daughter of Lord Hervey of Ickworth, in 1743. His father, by the way, was not Sir Constantine Phipps, but William Phipps, the Chancellor's son.

The account is continued in another hand, and obviously at a much later date. 'The lady always treated her husband with extreme disdain. He was made an Irish peer, Lord Mulgrave. The English peerage and earldom were all bestowed by Mr. Pitt on his second son, Lord Normanby's father. They have taken all the titles, and put themselves in the place of the Sheffields, Earls of Mulgrave and Dukes of Buckingham, with whose family they have no more connection than Lord Rokeby with the *real* Montagus. The mode of marriage was strange, but not unusual in those days. The Duke of Kent, when dying in 1740, sent for Lord Hardwicke (the Chancellor) and told him that he had made his grand-daughter, Lady Jemima Campbell, his heiress, an only daughter of the third Earl Breadalbane. If by his interest with the Crown he could obtain for her some of the honours of

the family, he would give her for a wife to his (Lord Hardwicke's) son, born in 1720. The Chancellor laid the matter before the king, who readily agreed to create her Marchioness Grey and Baroness Lucas of Cradwell. Lord Hardwicke then sent for his son from Cambridge, and the couple were married at the Duke of Kent's bedside. He was a well-disposed youth, wholly devoted to classical studies; she was a quiet, orderly girl, and both were good-tempered. They lived together to old age in perfect harmony and union, and were thought a pattern couple. He drew a very lover-like picture of her in the *Athenian Letters*, written by him and his brother, Charles Yorke.'

A quaint contrast to the foregoing account of alliances in high life is a letter from one Rachel Crafton, a widow, to her guardian, a copy of which was probably procured by Mrs. Delany in her Irish days, and kept because it gave so remarkable a glimpse into the bourgeois manners of the times. The letter, which is marked 'very curious,' is undated, and there is nothing to explain who Rachel Crafton was.

'Before I proceed further' (it begins), 'I must humbly beg this the favour of you not to put any false construction upon these lines, that it is out of wantonness or folly that I presume to give you this trouble, for it is only to let you see that I do not designe to dispose of myself, or anything of value belonging to me, without your consent or approbation; for I know you were placed in my unkle's stead, which makes me appeal to you, for you are all one as a Father to me, in not letting me be cast away, nor yet to Tye me up so sore against my will, which makes me bold to acquaint you with what I am informed, and what I am inclined unto,

provided you are content. But if soe be that my judgment may fail, I will be willing to submit to you In hopes you may propose perhaps better for me than I can for myself. And now I propose to begin as followeth, which is that I have been told that you was pleased several times to encourage Mr. Tracey to court me for his wife, and that you proferred to give an hundred pounds with me, on my unkle's account, which is as I understand allowed you by my unkle's orders in case I marry, which I presume I will be driven to at last, for I am very desolate, having no near friend to take care of me, as a loving Husband would doe, especially when I am sick; nor am I able to keep a servant as I am, but if I was a helpmeet perhaps between us we might be able to live in a house of our own, and not be tost from one place to another as I have been, like a tennis-ball; nor can I promise to myselfe to be kept out of the lash of Tongues, let me carry as I can, nor does any regard a lonesome woman, but strives to put their foot on their necks, as I too well have found this many a day, which makes me Court a married Life once more. But as for Mr. Tracey, I hope, dear Sir, you will not impose on me to marry him, not that I find any fault with the man's person or his age, but I am informed if I marry him I shall live but a slaverish life, for he lives much after the Irish way, and has a great house of Irishes about him, and I doe not covet being a step-mother. Besides, the man is, as I am informed by my friend Mr. Lawson, full of infirmities, and he says he would not have me concern myself with him. And besides, I have a reason best known to God and myself, that I am sure if my unkle knew of it, he would not let me have him, as I hope you will not, having been the cause of his pretending to me, for I am sure he

intends to come if he be not stoped, and to marry me, and take me away before May, for he and all his friends sayd as much before my face on the day graney Dalmar was buryed, but I held my tongue, and neither sayd for it or against it.

'And now I have done, and I hope you will put him off his designe by sending him word not to Trouble himselfe to come on any such account. For you cannot persuade me to like him, nor can you force me, nor can you tell what is the reason you may, for I never will be his wife unless you compel me to it, which I hope you never will, for fear it should prove a cross to me as my first marriage did. But if you would be pleased to make the like proposal to Dr. Fairservice or Mr. Wheelwright as you did to Samson Tracey, which you think would prove the best husband, I could be content (I will not lye) to lead my life with either of them which is my lot, for I presume to think one of them will fall to my lot. As for the Doctor, if he be not too young, and if you and he could agree upon the matter, I presume we might do well enough, for I would, I think, be a means to bring him out of the idle way of spending and drinking, as he does for want of one to take motherly care of him, and he might follow his calling, and settle in the place, and keep an apothecary's shop. But I would have you make the bargain so that I might have liberty to have about forty pounds of my portion at my own disposal, and he the other sixty to manage as he sees fitt. And I with my share would buy some grocery goods and put them in a shop, and turn my hand and bring in some gain to us both; and I would buy two or three milch cows, and keep a good servant, and follow some housewifery; and so I propose, with his practice, we might live comfortably enough together.

I do not know but if you please to give him encouragement but it may do; but if this do not please you, I hope Mr. Wheelwright may, and he may follow his trade, and you may divide my portion the same way with him, and I follow the same course as with the other. But if you know of a better match than one of them two, I hope you will help me to it. I hope you will consider of what I have said before the month of May be out, for I presume it will be a fitt time for us to go together, for then is the time to take servants and buy milch cows; and if you please in the meantime to speak to either of them I have named, what bargain you make I will stand to with any but Tracey; I cannot here of that with satisfaction. I pray goodness you may not expose my designe to any but yourselfe; and the Lord put it into your mind to doe for me as if I was your own child. So hoping you will not be offended, but when you see your own time will wright to me two or three times to let me know your pleasure, and how you like my proposall, for I would not have you speake to me before any one, is the humble request of, Sir, your most obedient servant at your command. Pray pardon my boldness, and do not be offended at me for what I have written.

'Dear Sir, I will never hide the truth from you, if it were God's will, as perhaps it may, and your pleasure, I would rather lead my life with the Doctor than with any man liveing, and have been of that mind ever since Mr. K. when alive made a proposall with him, because he has a genteel calling, and may be useful to the town and county, and I am sure carefull of me in time of sickness, and he may become a good man and a credit to my Family; and I hope you will be the same to him as your Father-in-law promised to be, if it be our luck to goe

together. And Mr. Lawson and Mr. Aston has good hopes of him, and I hope you will have the same; in all from R. C.

'Dear Sir, if it should be your pleasure to speak to the Doctor about me, pray do not let him know that I spoke to you, but that you spoke of your own accord, and that you believe it may do well, and that you will persuade me to it, for you may say that you are sure I will be directed by you sooner to take him than Tracey, is the desire of your once more humble servant,

'RACHEL CRAFTON.'

THE END

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